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THEY FOUND THE CHURCH THERE



THE MEMORIAL CHAPEL AT GUADALCANAL

Erected by Solomon Island natives in the military cemetery as a tribute to the American Forces. The chapel bears the inscription: "This is the House of God: This is none other than the Gate of Heaven." (See pages 43-45.)

Original sketch made for an Order of Service at the dedication of the chapel. Used by permission of 1st Lt. Charles E. Halm.

THEY FOUND THE CHURCH THERE

*The Armed Forces
Discover Christian Missions*

By

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

NEW YORK

Charles Scribner's Sons

1945

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To

DOROTHY PRENTICE COFFIN

and

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

With gratitude and affection

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Preface

THE MAKING of this little book has been in this fashion.

Like many others, I had noted reports here and there of the chance discovery of missions and native churches by men in the armed forces. It occurred to me that together these stories might point to a fact more striking and more significant than was apparent from the individual incidents. *The Saturday Evening Post* had asked for an article. I suggested that it take the form of a résumé of observations of the Church overseas by servicemen.

Accordingly, a number of missionary societies were requested to pass along accounts of this kind which might come to their attention. Through several months, material drifted in—excerpts from V-mail, press reports, clippings, occasional articles in Church journals. They were tossed into a drawer for later examination. When an opportunity came to go over the accumulated material, it was apparent that the incidents were not in twos or threes, or even dozens, but in scores, perhaps hundreds. It seemed that here was a composite chronicle of contemporary Christianity in out-of-the-way places all over the earth which might be worthy of fuller and more permanent record than a magazine article would make possible. Hence this book.

ii

Scholars are fond of marking the distinction between the sequence in which any series of events is *discovered* (*ordo cognoscendi*) and the sequence in which the events have actually *come to be* (*ordo essendi*). The latter is not infrequently the reverse of the former. Our narrative will follow the former. And in two respects.

By a strange paradox, the chronological sequence of discoveries of missions in the Pacific by the armed forces has been almost the reverse of the chronological order in which Christianity actually came to the different areas. It was in New Guinea that the South Pacific campaign first became acute; there native Christians were

first noted. Then followed Guadalcanal and the Solomons. And later, the Gilberts and Carolines and Marshalls and Marianas. But New Guinea was the last of these lands to be reached by missionaries. Earlier they had touched the Solomons; still earlier, the more northerly islands of Micronesia. However, there is a farther background of which both public and combatant troops are often too little aware—the great bases of supply and reinforcement. In the Pacific campaign, these have been located mainly at Hawaii, Samoa, the Fiji Islands and New Caledonia, in addition to Australia and New Zealand. Similarly, in the Christian advance across the Pacific, it was to the islands of the east that missionaries first came. There the most notable triumphs of Christian Faith were achieved. It was Polynesian and Melanesian Christians from Samoa and Tonga and the Fiji Islands and Hawaii who were foremost in bringing the new Faith, with all its attendant gifts of health and education and civilization, to their more primitive kinsfolk of the Solomons and Papua and Micronesia.

In the second place, our account begins with incidents in which *individual Christians* of far-away lands have flashed upon the consciousness of men in uniform bent only on the business of war, the detection and destruction of their enemies. These were the first “discoveries.” These incidents furnish the *foreground* of the picture. Then, behind these individual Christians have often been noted *Christian communities* and *native churches* from which the individuals have emerged and without which they would never have become or continued to be the kind of persons they are. These constitute the *middle-ground*. Behind these again have sometimes been discerned *Christian Missions* and *missionaries*, many of the latter not white men but black or brown or yellow men who had first come to Christianity and then guided their cousins of kindred race thither. Without these, Christian churches and communities would never have come into being. They are the *background* of the picture. It is obvious that the sequence of cause and effect is the exact reverse of the sequence of discovery. But here, likewise, there is a further step backward in the series which fighting men have neither time nor information to trace, and yet without which all the rest is meaningless. This is the *historic origin and development* of what today

stands forth with such vividness and charm. These *farther backgrounds* we have, in each major area, briefly etched in.

It is the despair of teachers that the casual or superficial student can never be persuaded to press his inquiry back along the line of the sequence of discovery, from effect to cause to prior cause, until the first and real cause of the series is reached, and the sequence of cause and effect is unveiled. So, with the data of this book. How many people, both at the front and at home, will pause in admiration before this or that single incident of heroism or compassion on the part of a native Christian, and rush on without asking the questions, "How did this come to be?" "What is the secret of this character?" "Why did he become such a person?" Those who are admired could readily give the answers.

It must suffice to say that no one has really appreciated the significance of these "discoveries" until he has followed the sequence of discovery back to the first cause. And in both respects—until he is introduced to the easternmost Christian communities of the Pacific where for just over a century the Church has been at work, in some respects the most amazing achievement of Christianity in all its history; and until he is brought face to face with the secret of it all—Christian Faith in its life-giving and life-transforming and life-directing power.

iii

My own interest in the part of the world with which these pages are mainly concerned, the islands of the Pacific, springs not only from their prominence in current war news but from the fact that it was my privilege to travel among them six years ago. To be sure, the only islands personally visited were Fiji and Samoa, for very brief stops, and the Netherlands East Indies. But I sailed through the Southwest Pacific for many weeks, and when one has observed typical parts of the vast expanse of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, it is not difficult to form a vivid picture of other similar areas. Moreover, one need not be ashore on Fiji or Samoa for more than a few hours to gain a clear impression of the meaning of a century or half-century of Christian influence for other islands where the Christian Mission has been at work. Some of those first-hand observations

are recorded in *For the Healing of the Nations*, Chapters 1-7 (reprinted in pamphlet form as *East Indies Discoveries*).

To the score of friends who have furnished the raw materials from which this book has been made up, I shall not attempt to express indebtedness by name. In only a few cases are the sources identified in the text. Often the observers themselves are allowed to remain anonymous. To all of these is due whatever value this chronicle may hold.

In a sense, this book is a sequel to *What IS the Church Doing?* which sought to portray Christians confronting the perils and problems of war in other parts of the world. Or, more accurately, it is another chapter in the many-sided story of Christian Churches in war-time.

H. P. V. D.

Union Theological Seminary,
New York,
New Year's Day, 1945.

THEY DISCOVER THE CHURCH—

“DEAR MOM: Because of missions, I was feasted and not feasted upon when I fell from the sky into this village.”

Through such homespun comments in their V-mail, many an American family is awakening to the fact that unexpected discoveries beyond coral atolls and foxholes, jungles and Japanese are being made by their boys in far places.

They are taking place, these discoveries, clean round the world—in New Guinea and the Solomons in the South Pacific, among the multitudinous islets of the Central Pacific, in the Belgian Congo and central Africa and upper Egypt, in the Near East and Iran and India, on the Burma Road and in western Yunnan. Wherever the far-flung tentacles of the American war machine reach out toward Tokyo, or American airmen parachute into unpredictable hazards, they find native folk of varied hues with friendly welcome, succor, protection; tiny mission-stations with food, medical care, boundless hospitality; missionaries of a half-dozen nationalities; above all, a quality of life and faith such as they have seldom met in “Christian America.” Two or three incidents of this sort might not be unexpected. But when they are multiplied by the dozens and scores, here is something worth closer attention.

THEY DISCOVER THE CHURCH—

1. *In New Guinea*
2. *In the Solomon Islands*
3. *In Micronesia*
4. *At the Rear Commands*
5. *Elsewhere*

I

In New Guinea

THEY BEGAN, these discoveries, long before American forces swung into effective action in the South Pacific.

It was Australia's darkest hour, those early months of 1942, comparable to Britain's plight in the summer of 1940. The Japanese had swept along the East Asian coast, past the Philippines and Singapore, through the Dutch Indies and down onto the northern coast of New Guinea with seemingly irresistible might. Between them and Port Moresby, "gateway to Australia," stood only a narrow ridge of mountains, less than sixty land miles across. At one time, the order was given: "to hold for forty-eight hours at all cost, to permit preparation of mainland defenses." Then came the desperate and heroic Australian defense of the homeland.

The last rampart was the famous Owen Stanley Range, that extraordinary razor-back which cleaves the New Guinea peninsula to a height of nearly three miles, peaks enveloped in perpetual snow at its top and equatorial swamps at its base. Across its glacial passes at 10,000 feet and through the steaming jungles below had to be transported the wounded to safety and treatment, and in the opposite direction every item of ammunition and supplies, all by human carrier along treacherous mountain trails. "In this awful climate, the only pack animals are the New Guinea people themselves." The feat was achieved by ten thousand natives hazarding every risk gladly in tasks which no others could perform.

An Australian officer summarizes the part played by the native Papuans: "I doubt whether people realize how much we owe to these simple children of nature. Without their aid, our position here would have quickly become untenable, and perhaps the Japs would even now have a stranglehold on our country. Quite apart from the wonderful work they did in carrying our wounded back over the Owen Stanleys and also the great job they did in helping us to main-

tain our supplies of food and ammunition to the front line, they have acted as guides to parties and individuals cut off from their Units, fed and cared for them, asking nothing in return; performed dangerous treks into enemy-occupied country and brought back valuable information; helped us build roads and bridges, drained malarial swamps, and assisted us in a hundred and one other ways." And an Allied general adds: "Without these boys we could not have advanced beyond a few miles into the Owen Stanleys, let alone cross them. The boys were to us what the motor transport units are to the desert campaigns."

But it was a wounded soldier who voiced the appreciation of his mates in the ranks in Kiplingesque lines:

Here's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy! In the fight against Japan
You have taught us all a lesson in the brotherhood of man;
Where the aching Owen Stanleys taunt and daunt us on the track,
We have seen the white soul shining out of faces ebony-black.
And as one we've worked and suffered, and as one we've lived and
died

By the rapids of Aairopi, in the swamps of Gona side.
So here's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, savage men of tender heart!
We, the fighters—we, the wounded—we've seen you play a part
That will ever be remembered when the warrior tales are told—
How you showed us in New Guinea something finer than its gold.

ii

A year almost to a day after Pearl Harbor, General MacArthur's forces moved in to take Buna. Then Americans likewise began to discover the "Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels."

When the aircraft carrier *Lexington* sank in the Battle of the Coral Sea, two fliers crash-landed near Rossel Island. Papuans rescued them, fed and protected them until they could send them off to safety. From earliest times, these islanders had been noted for their skill in succoring victims of shipwreck. But for a somewhat different purpose. When the steamship *St. Paul* had foundered near that same island eighty years before, three hundred Chinese had been similarly rescued by the grandparents of these natives. They also had

been well cared for, and whenever a feast was held some of the Chinese were invariably invited. But they never returned. "They came not as guests but as the *pièce de résistance* of the local feast." Ultimately only one Chinese remained alive.¹

Captain Charles S. Brown, pilot of a Boston bomber shot down near Buna, was also compelled to make a crash-landing in the sea. Rough surf forced him to paddle his rubber dinghy to shore. He plunged into the bush and lay hidden from the nearby Japanese. From sheer exhaustion he finally fell asleep. As dawn broke, he awoke to hear a voice calling softly, "Mr. Brown! Mr. Brown!" He reached for his automatic and peered out through the bushes. Instead of Japanese he saw a Papuan native who had found the airman's lifebelt with his name on it and knew the owner must be near. "Are there any Japs around?" Captain Brown inquired anxiously. He was reassured with a pat on the shoulder. Jacob, a native teacher in an outstation of the Anglican Mission, could speak, read and write good English. Jacob bandaged the injured flier's head, gave him food, and led him to the nearest mission station. Port Moresby was advised and Brown was subsequently picked up by an Australian plane, still chuckling gratefully over his strange encounter with Jacob, the Papuan "who had paged him in the bush."

Vern Hoagland, Associated Press correspondent, bailed out over the New Guinea jungle and wandered there for weeks. At last he came upon a native village. His first question which brought response was, "Where missionary station? White-man mission. Need help." The natives brought him to another outpost of the Church of England in charge of two missionaries. "I went to sleep," Hoagland wrote, "feeling grateful for the circumstances that had led me not merely to white men but to religious men, men who would understand how much I must have been helped from above, to have come this far." He adds, "Many churchgoers had seemed to me complete hypocrites. . . . But, watching these two poorly fed men who had risked their lives to remain with the natives in the jungle—watching

¹ Cf. J. H. P. Murray, *Papua or British New Guinea*, pp. 132 f., and W. E. Armstrong, *Rossel Island*, pp. 108 ff.

them at worship in this bare room, noting the quiet joy on their faces, listening to the musical words of the Scriptures—I realized that I must have been wrong.”² The natives escorted him across the Owen Stanley divide to safety. His condition was still so critical that one of them remained awake at all times to watch over him.

As the Allied campaign of recovery has pressed northward, to Rabaul on New Britain, to Lae and Salamaua, to Aitape and Hollandia, more and more of this vast unknown land has come into view. And everywhere, the same picture—native peoples clean, intelligent, intrepid, intensely loyal, devout; missionaries who have elected to remain in precarious hiding throughout the Japanese occupation; oases of health and hospitality and infinite helpfulness amidst one of the wildest and most dangerous regions on earth; above all, examples of Christian living, both individual and corporate, beyond any previously known.

Senator James M. Mead has put it into a single sentence: “American doughboys are reaping heavily where the missionaries have so long and patiently sown.”

iii

It is not men in uniform only who have found reason for gratitude to the islanders. Earlier in the war, the Hon. Starr Stuart, Chief Justice on the Friendly Islands, and his wife were en route to a new assignment in British Guiana when their ship was shelled and sunk by a German raider. After twenty-five days of imprisonment on the captor craft, they and 645 other passengers were put ashore with very little food, and less water, on Emirau, a rarely visited island of the Bismarck Archipelago off eastern New Guinea, inhabited by Kanakas who had been notorious cannibals. It was Christmas week. Mrs. Stuart recounts what followed:

“The first night my husband and I slept in a tiny copra shed close to the lagoon. . . . The next day was Sunday. We had heard a rumour that there was a ‘missionary’ on the island, so, in the cooler hour of the late afternoon, greatly daring, we decided to go down

² Vern Hoagland, *Letter from New Guinea*, pp. 62, 86 ff. Farrar & Rinehart.

to the nearby village and look for him or for the headman, who was said to speak some English.

"The sound of singing came from a Tongan type of church. As we drew near we recognized: 'Jesus loves me, this I know!' In English! After the *Germans*, the fire, the shells, the horror of captivity—'Jesus loves me,' in English! We went in, but we left before the end of the service, as it was otherwise entirely in Kanaka. Night falls like a curtain in the tropics, and we were anxious to regain our little hut before dark.

"We clambered on to the high verandah, and, close together for mutual comfort, dozed off into the uneasy sleep of the hungry.

"Suddenly I felt my husband's arm stiffen round me. 'The natives!' he whispered. About a dozen men approached carrying lights. One came forward, raised a wicker tray above his head and laid it on the verandah. 'Kai-Kai,' he said. (Food! Eat!) Good, hot, sweet potatoes! We fell upon them. We paused, thinking, we will keep the rest for to-morrow, but he said, 'No! To-morrow more!'

"The next day we called on the missionary to thank him. Not only had the natives sent food, but a small boy came to clean out the hut, several natives came to take away the malodorous sacks of copra, and the missionary sent a kitchen table, a wooden chair, some more food and a pannikin of water. Arrived at the missionary's hut, we asked if we might come up the ladder. 'Oh! Yes!' And he welcomed us in. Tall, ebony-black, with fine hawk-like features, a shock of black hair, lovely white teeth, and beautiful eyes; a pure bred Solomon Islander, one of a family of sometime cannibals. By talking very simply, repeating mostly the words he used and therefore knew, we had got on very well with the headman in the morning. We did the same now, but it was less necessary. The missionary told us his story.

"My home is the Solomons. We were not always Christians—no! The missionaries had evidently thought well of him: he was sent to Fiji and trained. Returning, he conceived that he had a call to the wider field of the Pacific. He wanted to 'go abroad and preach.' The missionaries hesitated. He was young and untried. Finally he was allowed to go to Emirau, a station which did not

justify the appointment of a white missionary but where there was work to do.

"Our missionary came. He had lived with his flock, fished, planted, hoed the ground, and got them interested. He understood them. No, they were not all Christians; many were, but not all had been baptized. He was no braggart. 'They like the Church,' he said. Were there cannibals now? Well, he would not say; but they were friendly; yes, he thought they were really *all* friendly.

"Then he sang to us to the accompaniment of his guitar what he said was *his* story: 'And I will make you fishers of men—if you will follow Me.'

"The natives continued to give us food and water from their own water hole. For Christmas the missionary brought three small native eggs and a watermelon. 'These are the presents,' he said. 'There isn't much; the Germans cleared the village of all they could find.'

"At last the rescue ship from Australia arrived. We went to thank our natives before joining the rush over to the other side.

"'The whites have come,' we said. 'Now we can repay you for all your kindness.' The little group said nothing. Then the headman replied, in his scanty English, 'We give you some? Yes? You want to give *us* some? Yes? There is no need. We are Christians. We gave to you because you had so little.'

iv

Now that the weeks of most acute peril are past, it is possible for the fighting men to press behind the immediate incidents of succor and relief and to gain a further perspective on what they have observed.

Sergeant Joe Perry writes home:

"A few weeks ago a small party of us were selected to go on a week's hike through the interior of the place where we are at present. It was the first chance we had to observe the natives in the tropics under normal conditions. Most were living in the primitive way in which they had always lived, with the exception of having ceased the practice of cannibalism. They were nothing extra, pretty lazy, not overclean, and had a well-developed commercial sense.

"After several days of marching over a good-sized mountain range,

we came down to a village of a totally different sort. Years ago this village had been visited by a Church of England missionary who had been successful in his calling, for this settlement was a great improvement over all we had seen. The hub of everything was a church built of slip bamboo with a thatched roof. A native clergyman was in charge, and he spoke fairly good English. The village was clean and neat as a pin. Every night just before sunset the bell would toll and all the natives would file into the church for evening service.

"We attended a service the following morning. It was the regular service so far as I could see, with Communion, though I couldn't understand a word of the language. It was all from memory, the only printed matter in the church being the Bible. They could really sing. Besides a good assortment of hymns, we later found out, they knew several old songs like 'The Last Rose of Summer', and 'Tipperary.'"

And Sam L. Graham reports from somewhere in New Guinea:

"Until I left the lights and thrills of civilization for the first time over a year ago, I had a few mental reservations as to the value and usefulness of foreign missions and did not believe it an investment from which any spiritual or material return could be expected, especially in such places as these primitive and practically uncivilized regions of the world. THIS DOUBTING THOMAS . . . held little faith that many of the natives were really won to Christ and a true understanding of the Christian religion. I have had all my doubts and questionmarks as to the value and importance of missions to the world, as well as to the natives themselves, erased. Certainly I have been very much mistaken in underestimating the importance of the self-sacrificing lives of missionaries. The Mission Boys, those educated in the missions, differ so greatly from the rest of the natives that I can pick them out of any group. Their English is usually very good, at least better in comparison than my own 'pidgin,' or the business English spoken by most of the natives in trading. At my station many of the natives of a nearby native regiment joined us at church on Sundays. Their knowledge and viewpoints on the Bible and Christianity were a revelation to me. On several occasions

we were favored by duets, trios, and quartets by some of their men, to the accompaniment of the piano or guitar played by their own colored brothers. All are wonderful musicians and possess beautiful voices. The gardening and other practical skills they have learned from the missionaries have helped provide additional foods for their unchanging diet, and have improved their lives generally. The difference in the cleanliness of person, clothing, and habitation between those of mission influence and others is very marked indeed."

Graham was reported dead on Goodenough Island, February 19, 1944.

At Christmastide a contingent of American troops was sent to a nearby island for natives to be formed into a labor corps. As it happened, they returned with the Papuans on Christmas Eve. The latter suggested a Christmas Eve service. The Americans explained that they had no chaplain. But the native men were undaunted. Decorating a grass hut for the occasion, they invited the Americans to attend evensong, and themselves conducted the service and led the singing of carols.

An American Lutheran chaplain describes his discovery of a center of his own Church in northern New Guinea:

"Our ubiquitous jeep had taken us some fifteen miles over a road of hairpin curves on mountainsides, a single track that snaked its way through valleys, streams, and kunai grass. Most of the trip demanded the extra low gear, and twice we had to get out and walk up the hills because the little jeep refused to haul more than its own weight.

"Then I found myself for the first time on the soil of one of the New Guinea missions of the American Lutheran Church. The buildings stood on a height of ground from which most of the valley was visible. With the red roofs and surrounding gardens, the mission presented a delightful picture with a background of green mountains.

"The native police boy brought the keys so we could enter the buildings. . . . The buildings and property of the mission are guarded by him, and no one may enter the buildings without first getting permission.

"I entered the missionary's study. The first book to catch my eye

was a German Bible translated by Dr. Martin Luther. I looked at some correspondence and church papers. . . . Then I saw the name of the missionary, E. P. Helbig. . . . There was no doubt about it. I was standing in one of the mission outposts of the American Lutheran Church in New Guinea.

"The Church had pioneered in this valley. The mission had not been very old when the war came and forced the removal of the missionary. But already its influence could be felt in this valley among the natives who dwelt there. I walked outside and spoke to the Kanakas clustered about the entrance to the house.

"'You stop along this mission?' I asked the group.

"A little Kanaka about twelve years old answered, 'Me savvy. Me stop along this mission.'

"'You savvy Lutheran?' I asked.

"'Me savvy. Me Lutheran. Me stop along this mission.'

"I turned the collar of my shirt so he could see the cross. 'Me missionary,' I announced. 'Me American. Me Lutheran!'

"The Kanaka's eyes rolled, and then a huge grin crept over his face. He walked up to me and threw his arms around me and patted me on the back, saying all the while, 'Good Pella, good Pella' (fellow).

"The news that a Lutheran missionary had come to visit the mission spread like wildfire. I had a sizable group of natives following me as I went out into the garden where the mulberry trees were black with ripe, delicious fruit.

"I began to pick the berries but was halted by the natives who said, 'No, Master,' and then motioned that I was to be seated on the ground. Sitting there, they plied me with the delicious fruit, bringing it to me in handfuls. When I could eat no more, they wrapped several quarts in banana leaves and insisted that I take them with me.

"It was one of the great thrills of a lifetime to visit this Lutheran outpost in the wilds of New Guinea. . . . I found it in this valley, so rich in vegetables and fruit and populated by Kanakas unbelievably filthy and primitive.

"In the evening I travelled to one of my units to hold a church service. After supper I took my turntalk or interpreter, Wangooli, with me and sauntered into one of the many squalid villages which dot the valley. Wangooli is a clever lad of about twelve who had

spent two years at the mission station. He has an excellent command of pidgin English, and through him I was able to converse in a limited fashion with the natives in the valley.

"Two men, two Marys, and a half-dozen pickaninnies were sitting around a small fire in the center of the village. Wangooli sang out to them that we were friends and meant no harm. One of the men was holding a little pickaninny about nine months old and pointed to his back. The baby had fallen into the fire and had four inches of blister on the small of his back. I told them I was very sorry and then sent Wangooli back to camp for some salve, gauze and tape. Our medical boy bandaged that little Kanaka, and the group around the fire said I was a 'good pella too much.'

"Just then the Luluai of the village came along and squatted by the fire. He was the chief of the village and claimed to have a total of ten wives. Upon questioning Wangooli, I discovered that he actually had only two. The Luluai had become much enamoured of the Yanks and particularly of a lad in the outfit named Shanahan. When Shanahan was sent to the hospital with malaria, the Luluai killed and buried his own name and took the name of Shanahan, the American soldier. Thereafter he always came to attention upon entering the camp, saluted, and announced, 'Me Luluai. Me Shanahan.'

"I turned my collar; again the cross was magic! The eyes of the Kanakas rolled as they looked at me with new respect. I was a man belong God! Shanahan, the Luluai, began to speak. His voice rose and became intense. He chattered and gesticulated and then stopped and pointed to me, 'Him good pella.'

"I had been listening to the flow of native words and now turned to my faithful Wangooli. 'What he say?'

"'Him talk about Sing Sing.'

"It developed that the Luluai had been describing my church service of the previous week. Unknown to me he had crept up to the native building which served as a mess hall, and had watched the entire service.

"'Luluai, I asked, 'you savvy mission stop along?' And I named the Lutheran mission in the valley.

"Wangooli interpreted, and the Luluai chattered in reply. I heard him mention the missionary's name, Helbig. The other Kanakas

around the fire savvied his name too. Wangooli told me that they were agreed that the missionary had been a good pella too much. In fact, he had been a good pella No. 1.

"The heathen Kanakas around the fire were but echoing a common conviction of the value of missions and missionaries in New Guinea. Many people in America consider a missionary a queer, long-haired, wild-eyed individual, a superenthusiast whose work is to be humored by contributions of nickels and dimes. In New Guinea he is considered an intensely practical man, a man of position and influence, whose work is tremendously important among the native population. Our soldiers have seen the fruit of mission work in New Guinea and are now saying, 'Back home we had no idea of the good missionaries were doing.'

"I looked at the Luluai. His hair was matted with pig's grease and dirt, and hung from his head like the dirty wool of a sheep. The Marys squatted around the fire, their skin coated with many layers of filth, ashes, dirt, and pig grease. One of them held a little pig in her arms. The white bandage on the little pickaninny was in strange contrast to the blackness of the filth which covered his skin and hair. And yet the father held the little baby as tenderly as any of us would hold his own children.

"The thought of the great need of these primitive people for the Church and its gospel overwhelmed me. Godliness and cleanliness are the only needs of these Kanakas.

"The clouds of war have moved away from this beautiful valley, so liberally endowed with any food which one could wish. In time it will be possible for missionaries to return once again to their stations. . . .

"The little pickaninny had cried himself to sleep as I left the little group squatting around the fire. Walking back to camp, I prayed to our merciful God that He might hasten the day of peace when the eternal message of a loving and gracious God, through the Savior Jesus Christ, might again be brought to the uttermost ends of the earth and even to this beautiful valley."



Who are these Papuans who so suddenly have loomed in the field of vision of fighting men of the Allied forces? How came they

to develop such qualities of gallantry and faithfulness and prodigal kindness?

An Australian officer writes: "Have you realised that practically all that they have done, and will continue to do, is due to the efforts of a devoted band of men and women who have risked countless dangers and deadly tropical diseases in order to bring the Gospel to these formerly benighted people?"

"What a wonderful work theirs has been! And what a transformation has taken place here in the past half century or so. And how grateful are the native Christians for the story which has been told them and which has so uplifted them.

"The medical side of the missions' work is one which is greatly appreciated by the natives, and it brings home to them in a vivid way the picture of the Christ as the Great Healer. They have a childlike faith in the efficacy of the white man's medicine.

"Just to give you some idea of how the lads in this Unit have been impressed by the urgency for restoring the work as soon as possible: somebody in our Unit had the idea of taking up a collection after Church Parade one day and handing it over to the Padre for rehabilitation work. Although more than half the Unit were away on a job, in no time £65 had been collected and handed over, to the great surprise and unbounded delight of the Padre. That little incident may show you how much we have been impressed by the mission work, and the general character of the natives coming under mission influence.

"I had about fifty of the boys from two neighbouring islands; be assured that the work which had been done there was good enough to satisfy me that anything I could do to help it was well worth while.

"I asked one of them one day, 'Are you a mission boy?' Immediately his face lit up and he replied, 'Yes, Taubada' (Methodist Mission).

"When I told him that I, too, was a Methodist, he was so highly delighted that he turned to his mates and informed them all that the 'Big Taubada' (I was so called to distinguish me from an N. C. O., who, although much bigger than I physically, was the

'Little Taubada') was a Methodist. Work ceased straight away and I was surrounded by an eager throng, all asking if I knew their missionary.

"They were a happy band of men and boys—industrious workers and great singers. They used to sing as they worked, and I could not but be impressed by the difference between them and the natives in another area who had been under the civilising (?) influence of the white man, but without the benefits of Christianity.

"One night I went down to their camp for a 'sing-song,' and besides singing their own songs and doing descriptive dances (one, playing cricket, was a masterpiece of mimicry, even to a clap representing the sound of the bat meeting the ball), they sang a number of hymns in the native language.

"The grand finale was 'All people that on earth do dwell,' and I think that the memory of them singing that grand old hymn, in perfect harmony, will ever remain with me. Whenever I hear it, I am sure that it will always conjure up a vivid mental picture of a perfect tropical night, with the still waters of the bay reflecting the myriad stars as a background to the graceful, swaying palms and quaintly built native houses.

"As I walked back to my tent, the thought came to me of how much had been accomplished in a few short years. They are a very lovable people now, and it seems hard to realise that it is not so long ago that they were cannibals and head-hunters.

"They have a very real faith, and I must say that I admire the way they are carrying on under difficulties, just waiting for the day which will bring their beloved missionaries back to them to carry on where they were forced to leave off.

"God grant that it may be soon."

An Air Force major gives this description of a typical mission center:

"A cairn of stones, an altar, not far from Buna. It was twenty feet high, five feet at the top and twenty at the base. It was the one thing remaining untouched by bomb or shell. The natives remembered it as an altar of sacrifice when they were head-hunters and cannibals. Here the victims of their raids had been slain as a votive

offering to their gods, and the flesh eaten. But now a large white cross was superimposed over the heathen cairn. Instead of taking part in cannibal rites, the natives were sitting in front of the cross, listening to the story of Calvary. And once again we heard native voices sing: 'Jesus shall reign, where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run.'"

Many would second the statement of an Australian lieutenant to the Methodist mission headquarters: "It gives me pleasure to have the opportunity of expressing my admiration for the work of your missions in New Guinea. The effect of the work is very apparent even under present abnormal circumstances. As a layman, my first impressions were of the honesty, loyalty and courage of the natives, and we have arrived at the conclusion that the credit lies mainly with the missions for their training."

And the Bishop of New Guinea, who has lived through the tragic months with the people he serves, may justly declare: "They have shown the reality of the Christian faith so many of them profess and bear. They have done Christlike work—but, more than that, they have shown Christ to Australians. One might have expected that it would have been the other way round, that these brown people, who have but recently emerged from savagery and the stone age, would have seen Christ in the Australian. Perhaps they have. But the fact is, many Australian soldiers who perhaps never had seen the likeness of Christ in their own home life have seen Him in the faces and lives of those brown Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels."

II

BEHIND these incidents of contemporary conflict lies a half century of human advance as remarkable as any which history records.

New Guinea disputes with Greenland the distinction of being the world's largest island. Its vast bulk, stretching the distance from Omaha to New York in a southeasterly direction towards Australia with a maximum girth of some four hundred miles, embraces terri-

tory three and a half times larger than Great Britain, equalling Texas and Louisiana combined. It contains the most extensive unexplored areas on earth, except polar regions. In physiography no less than in size, New Guinea furnishes striking contrasts to the neighboring wave-washed coral atolls. "Vast stretches of plain and plateau form an area unequaled in the Pacific for agricultural purposes; while its mountain ranges, rising as high as 16,000 feet above sea-level, give it a grandeur and impressiveness unexpected in a South Sea island. Perhaps the most wonderful physical feature of the country is its huge river system. . . . Nature is prodigal in New Guinea. There are dense forests in the interior, and vast untraversed jungles, where vegetation becomes riotous. Brilliant birds of paradise and rainbow-colored butterflies flit in the tropic light and shade; great cassowary birds tread softly in the billowy native grasses, and in the slimy marge of the ever-flowing rivers unshapely crocodiles snooze and yawn. New Guinea is in the heart of the tropics, and the blessings and the curses of the sun-god alike are hers."¹

Its populations, related to native peoples of all the surrounding lands, are no less diversified. Melanesians predominate in the north. Negritos and pygmies are found in the deep interior. Ebony-skinned, frizzle-haired Papuans inhabit the south and east. In all, they total more than a million. It is the Papuans principally who have become embroiled in this war. One of the earliest white settlers among them, and a foremost authority on their culture, thus describes them at the end of the last century:

"The good people of the land are the healthy, the wealthy in food or property, the wise in sorcery; the bad are the poor, the weak, the aged, the sickly. Immorality, unless found out, is considered a virtue; lying, a trait of character not condemned; abortion, a common practice; the marriage tie very slight, divorce taking place for trivial causes. . . . In many instances the women are cruel to their offspring, causing their death, frequently in anger at their husbands. . . . People of low rank are often buried before the breath has left the body. When a mother dies, her surviving child will be buried with the corpse. One of twins is almost always killed. . . . Cannibalism prevails, more especially to take revenge. . . . War is waged with

¹ John W. Burton, *The Call of the Pacific*, pp. 213-4.

little intermission. Prisoners are tortured, and one tribe of warriors is a source of great terror by the practice of drinking human blood. . . .

"Worship of a deity is unknown, and there are no idols. . . . There is a strong belief in the efficiency of secret incantations, and in the power of those endowed with occult influences for beneficent or malevolent purposes. . . .

"Sorcery, which is universally practiced, is the great controller of events; rain, wind, drought, crops, success in trade or war, health and sickness, life and death, are all under the direct influence of wizards and witches. . . . The great feeling inspired by the belief in occult powers is that of terror. Not only are there spirits who cause thunder, and earthquakes, and hurricanes, and the woods filled with beings who slay the unwary and the foolhardy, but sorcerers and witches possess power over life and death. According to the native idea no one dies a natural death. The poor Papuan lives in constant fear lest a sorcerer touch him surreptitiously with a secret hand, or an invisible stick or stone, and so cause his death.

"The only salvation from the ills of life is secret incantation. . . . To describe the belief of the Papuan in a few words: 'Charm without ceasing! In everything perform secret incantations!'"²

On his first visit to nearby New Ireland, which is considered part of the same area, the redoubtable pioneer missionary, Dr. George Brown, established contact with an extremely treacherous clan. "The chief was called Sangin—'the smell of it'—because his village was seldom free from the smell of roasting bodies. From the rafters of the house hung thirty-five human jaw-bones and unmentionable parts of human bodies. On the trunk of the palm just outside, seventy-six notches recorded past orgies. Skulls grinned from the stately yellow *Luluho* tree."

Unlike most of their neighbors, the Papuans had no clan organizations and no hereditary rulership, indicating a particularly aboriginal state of primitivism and creating special problems for the task of civilizing. In industry, they were still at the level of the Stone Age.

Politically, New Guinea is now divided into three vast areas. Roughly the western half has, since the middle of the nineteenth century, been under Dutch rule. In the eighteen-eighties, the eastern

² William E. Bromilow in *A Century in the Pacific*, pp. 542-6. The Epworth Press. Used by permission.

part was again halved into northern and southern sections claimed by Germany and Great Britain respectively. In 1906, the original British territory, known as Papua ("fuzzy-headed"), was transferred to Australian control. After the First World War, Germany's possessions in the north and east were likewise mandated to Australia.

But geography dictates a somewhat different division, more significant for practical purposes in both peace and war. As we have noted, across the long southeast peninsula strikes the great Owen Stanley range, severing northern from southern Papua. Christian missionaries wisely adapted their plans to natural considerations. It is a chief strength of mission work in Papua that, from the outset, responsibility has been clearly divided between the three principal Protestant Churches at work there. The littoral to the southwest of the mountains was assigned to Congregationalists of the London Missionary Society. It was they who first brought Christianity to Papua. Their history chronicles many of the most notable achievements, including the romantic saga of the great martyred founder, John Williams. But, because of their location, they stand largely outside our story. Anglicans from Australia assumed responsibility for the mainland north and east of the mountains, and Australian Methodists for the islands off this coast. Consequently it is chiefly Christians of Anglican and Methodist affiliation who have been involved in the impact of the present conflict upon Papua.

During the period of German rule in northeastern New Guinea, Lutherans from the homeland were active there; but with the change in sovereignty after World War I, they were reinforced by Lutherans of Australia and the United States. Australian Methodists also have extensive work in this area. Naturally, Dutch societies have the vast western half in charge. Roman Catholics are found here and there throughout the territory, and especially on the larger islands off its northeasterly shores.

II

It was in 1891, shortly after the British annexation of Papua, that the first two Anglican missionaries waded ashore on its eastern coast. A circle of warriors greeted them, with spears poised to slay at a

word from their chief. Happily, the word was not spoken. Instead the chief made friends with the strangers, and sold them land for 112 pounds of tobacco, 10 tomahawks, a bundle of knives, beads and pipes, and a piece of Turkey-red. The mission was started.

Before the first year had ended, the great pioneer had sickened and died. But others came forward to take his place, ably supported by native missionaries from already-evangelized islands.

Forty-eight years later at the same spot where the work had begun, a great cathedral was dedicated, one hundred and eighty feet long built of reinforced concrete with a seating capacity of two thousand. Erected over a period of five years at a cost of \$20,000, of which a fifth was contributed by the Papuans, it had been constructed entirely by native laborers who came in relays of three months working without wages. When the little original chapel was pulled down to make way for the cathedral, it was discovered that one of its corner posts had taken root and budded, and there had grown a magnificent tree which now shades the mission station as "silent but eloquent witness to the growth of the Church through fifty years." The work had extended to fifteen other centers up the three-hundred-mile coastline and into the interior.

It has been a consistent policy of all missions in Papua to disturb native customs as little as possible and to conserve all of their best. Hon. the Rev. John D. Bodger, redoubtable dean of the Cathedral and member of the Legislative Council of Papua, who remained at his post throughout occupation and whose recent visit to the United States and Canada thrilled audiences with a new understanding of New Guinea, explains: "All down the years, the desire of the missionaries has been to let the Christian Church of Papua become, not an imported foreign affair, dressed up in European fashion, but an indigenous Church, Christian in doctrine and practice, yet growing out of the soil and culture and art of the native races. . . . On Easter Eve, when the new fire is made and blessed in the Cathedral, it is made according to the native methods. Hillmen from the interior rub their sticks together while the coast native brings a spark by a different method; then the two flames are brought together and blessed to the service of God and man. Gum from the jungle trees is used as incense, and oil from the cocoanut kindles the Sanctuary

Lamps. So the native products and customs are blended with the ancient rites of the Christian Church.”¹

Schools have been spread through the hinterland from which the most promising students come in to the headquarters center for advanced training, not only in the three Rs and languages, but also in agriculture, health and manual arts. Today, that practical education is also bearing fruit. “One sees them as electrical engineers, maintaining trucks, marine engines and power plants. They work as printers, typists, plumbers, house-builders, boat-builders and as office assistants. They are careful surgeons and anæsthetists, and have been known to repair watches, typewriters, gramophones and automatic firearms.” Moreover, they are keen sportsmen. “There are many good football and cricket teams amongst them. Members of an American engineering outfit declared that they would make splendid baseball players, their sureness of eye and clean throwing being especially noticeable.”²

From their meager resources, they have learned to give generously. And not for their own interests alone. A quarter of all contributions goes for mission work beyond their own district. A short time before the War, when their country was afflicted with a series of earthquakes which did but minor damage, they brought a special thank offering with this request: “Do you remember having told us about the earthquake in Chile some months ago and of the great suffering and distress of our brothers there? We would like to send this offering to help them in the rebuilding of their homes.”

iii

It was in the same year 1891 that Methodists from Australia landed on an island off the Papuan coast “chosen as headquarters because of its central situation and large population of notorious warriors.” The party numbered seventy-five, of whom all but ten were Christians from other South Sea islands who came as missionaries from Melanesian communities already Christianized. “The greatest difficulties the mission had to contend with were the unhealthiness of the climate, the conservative hold the people had of customs of a

¹ John D. Bodger, *Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels of Papua*, p. 16.

² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

degrading character, the intertribal warfare and readiness to take up spear, club, or knife at the slightest offense, the terrible power of sorcery, and the keen trading instinct, which prevented acts of generosity even to friends. . . . In twenty years not one of the original party remained, some dying of fever, and others returning to their own land broken in health."¹

Nevertheless, work spread rapidly to other islands. Just twenty-five years later, there were 61 churches, 219 other centers for worship, over a hundred Papuan preachers, some four thousand church members or candidates for membership, and 25,000 church attendants.

So numerous are the languages in New Guinea that the great Congregationalist pioneer, James Chalmers, whom his intimate friend Robert Louis Stevenson characterized as "the most attractive, simple, brave and interesting man in the whole Pacific," used to aver that Babel was located there. As always in introducing education and Christianity among primitive peoples, the reduction of one or more of these native dialects to written characters, the preparation of school-books and the translation of the Bible were primary and urgent necessities. Here two figures are outstanding. One was an Anglican, Samuel Tomlinson, who "with no special training and little educational facilities in his early years, wrote out in ruled school exercise books the whole Bible as he and his Mukawa colleagues translated it." The other was the senior leader of the Methodists, Dr. W. E. Bromilow. With the assistance of a native teacher, Eliesa, he translated the Bible into what he described as "the language of the worst cannibals in Papua." Numbers above five had to be created. A word for "forgiveness" had to be invented since the idea had been wholly absent. When Dr. Bromilow prepared to leave the work from which he was being driven by ill-health, the chief, in earlier years a notorious headhunter, said this goodbye: "I shall not stay to see the ship take you away. I could not bear it. Before you came to us, Dobu was like hell, but you brought love to us, and now in going yourself and removing your goods, you cannot take that love away. It will ever remain with the Sacred Book you have given us."

¹ Bromilow, *op. cit.*, pp. 550, 547.

iv

The hazards, not only of the early years but of the whole half century, are well illustrated in some of the experiences of Roman Catholic missionaries in New Britain, the great island off the north-east coast on which is located the capital city of the mandated territory, Rabaul, major objective of the campaign of December 1943.

In 1882, five young Missionaries of the Sacred Heart reached Rabaul from Barcelona. "Scarcely had they settled when malaria laid them low. Then came more misfortunes. Their new house burned down and the missionaries just escaped with their lives."

Even twenty-five years later, five priests and five nuns were brutally murdered in the midst of their daily tasks of practical ministry and devotion. But reinforcements to twice their number came to take their places. In another quarter of a century, a Catholic community of 65,000 Melanesians had been formed.

As late as 1937, natural catastrophe overwhelmed the mission. "An earthquake shook the whole Rabaul area. . . . Frequent minor quakes followed. Next day a tremendous explosion occurred on a tiny island which had sprung up sixty years before. The sea boiled and a huge column of smoke and steam rose through the seething waters, intermingled with immense boulders and grey ashes. A canoe was swallowed with five native occupants. They were never found. From all parts people fled in every direction. Five hundred died instantly in the lava and fumes. Mission schooners being loaded with supplies lifted anchor and sped through smoke and flames to rescue them. At midnight 1000 refugees were being accommodated at the mission headquarters. The eruption lasted four days and four nights and left hundreds of square miles a barren desert. In the meantime, without so much as an order having been issued, the vast mission organization switched over to rescue work. Hundreds after hundreds came in. Houses and stores were put at their disposal, new buildings were erected overnight, light and water were provided, clothes were washed, food cooked in huge quantities, and all these works of mercy proceeded naturally and smoothly, without interrupting community life and without disorder."

Two features of this half-century chronicle warrant special note.

One was the remarkably enlightened character of the British administration of Papua. The first Governor, Sir William MacGregor, "realized that here was a race of men, headhunters and cannibals, true, who should be governed for their own sakes and welfare and not for the advantage of the white man. The natives were not to be exploited. Vested interests were given no chance to operate. The Governor was severely criticized, but maintained his policy throughout his long term of office. There never has been any colour barrier or question." It was Sir William MacGregor who invited the Anglican and Methodist Churches to send missionaries to New Guinea to further the civilizing of the Papuans. Virtually all educational, medical and other social service work was entrusted to them. On the conclusion of his notable term of administration, Sir William wrote: "The two finest and best institutions I left in New Guinea were the constabulary and village police, and the missions. . . . No attempt at encroachment was ever encouraged or facilitated by the Government, which was, however, always ready to procure land for any new settlement, without regard to Church or sect. To encourage mission work was considered a sacred duty by the Government."

His successor, Sir Hubert Murray, himself an Irish Catholic, has carried forward the same policy. A Department of Native Affairs of the Australian Government supervises Papuan interests and protects right of appeal to the courts. There is a small head tax, but its proceeds are reserved for the Native Benefits Fund which supports medical services, education, and maintenance of native police. Even western business enterprise, always the gravest menace to the integrity, character and welfare of native peoples, has been held firmly in check. Employers of labor have been brought under the Labour Ordinance which regulates fair scales of wages and conditions of work. "No native was allowed to be absent from his village for longer than four years consecutively; thus the danger of breaking up family life was avoided. The native was never disinherited from his land nor was he allowed to forget that his primary task was to till the soil that he had inherited from his ancestors."

Sir Hubert has added his testimony of indebtedness to Christian missionaries: "British colonial administrators have, without exception, expressed their high appreciation of the assistance which they have received from Missions of all denominations. . . . Christianity is not a 'creed outworn,' but is a living force which can nerve men and women, irrespective of race and colour, to deeds of strange self-sacrifice and heroism in the warfare against the powers of evil and darkness—that long warfare in which there is no truce and in which there can be no discharge."

It is doubtful whether colonial administration of the twentieth century offers a finer example of intelligent partnership of Government and Church in behalf of a backward people. It is to this partnership that the extraordinary advance must be attributed, an achievement witnessed in Papuan lives of beauty and deeds of valor in the present hour. It justifies Dean Bodger's description of the British administration as "the finest ever achieved in the ruling of a native people."

vi

The other factor is the part played in this record by native peoples of kindred races from neighboring regions of the Pacific.

Of the pioneering band of seventy-five Methodists, no fewer than sixty-five were South Sea islanders, from Fiji and Tonga and Samoa. The proportion among Anglicans and Congregationalists and others was not greatly different. True, active direction of the work from the head-stations was, in those early years, retained by white men. But it was these colleagues of native race and hue who were located on lonely islands or assigned to clear jungles and press to new frontiers in the interior. The work of most hazardous difficulty and risk was largely theirs. It was they who won numbers of kinsfolk to the faith. And it was often they who paid the ultimate price through disease and violent death.

III

THE FIRST two years of the War impressed the Papuans only with its absurdity. "You white people," one of them exclaimed, "have

beautiful things—fine buildings, lovely pictures and good music; in fact, all the lovely things of life. And then you go to war and you smash them all up. I think you are very foolish.”

Then its impact fell full on them more terrible than nature's typhoons or volcanic eruptions. They met its horrors and perils in the fashion suggested above.

When the Japanese overwhelmed eastern New Guinea, white residents were ordered out to Australia by the British authorities. Many of the missionaries insisted upon remaining. The Anglican Bishop broadcast a message to his staff:

“We must endeavor to carry on our work in all circumstances, no matter what the cost may ultimately be to any of us individually. God expects this of us. The church at home, which sent us out, will surely expect it. The universal church expects it. The tradition and history of missions requires it of us. . . . The people whom we serve expect it of us. We could never hold up our faces again if, for our own safety, we all forsook Him and fled when the shadows of the passion began to gather around Him in His spiritual and mystical body, the church in Papua.”

Six weeks later, the mission steamboat was bombed and the Bishop machine-gunned while visiting territory already in Japanese hands. Many of the little stations were bombed and burned. The missionaries and their native associates took to a nomadic existence in the hinterland. These were some of the Australian and Papuan Christians whom American airmen and soldiers “discovered,” or better, were discovered by, on the coral beaches and in the jungles.

On the islands off the coast, most of the Methodist missionaries complied with the Government order. Their leader reports: “When we left Papua, the authorities would not evacuate the South Sea Island staff. I told the Misima people that Isikeli (a native missionary from Tonga) was in charge. They were to listen to him as they had listened to me. Since then he has done a wonderful job.

“I recently met a man who, during his stay on Misima, had had no sympathy for the Mission. Now he cannot find words enough to describe his admiration for Isikeli. It appears that when we left the island, the unruly elements in the native community caused serious

trouble. Isikeli appealed to them, and eventually made an end to the trouble.

"Isikeli reports that the best attended quarterly meeting on record was held recently. . . . The teachers are carrying on their work without reward, and when we learn that sixty-one local preachers attended the quarterly meeting, we are convinced that there is a good spirit in our people. The interest in the work is a testimony to Isikeli's wise and capable leadership.

"Some time ago, some renegade natives from another island murdered an officer and his native assistants. Isikeli felt that the children of the murderers would not be any better than their fathers if left without Christian teaching. He now has nine of these children on the Mission Station.

"When I came away I left about \$60 worth of groceries, tinned food, etc., and told Isikeli and Mere to use them, but they have kept everything in case some soldier or airman should come to the island. . . . From reports received, I gather that everything that we left (and we left practically everything we had) is being carefully looked after by Isikeli and Mere."

Since the days of John Williams, ships named after the great pioneer have been serving L.M.S. missions. An article in *The Chronicle* for November 1943 gives a fascinating account of a voyage made by the *John Williams V*—the fifth edition of the *Children's Ship*—made after many months of enforced idleness. Twenty calls were made at thirteen islands, and in almost all cases it was found the local pastors and teachers had been carrying on bravely with little news from the outer world and practically no European assistance. At every visit services were held, and these were well attended. The people were greedy for news, but there was no sign of despondency. On one island the people, hearing of the bombing of churches in England, on their own initiative made a gift of over \$300. On another a sum of \$500 was raised for the same purpose, but before this money could be handed over to the missionary on his return visit the people's own church had been destroyed by an enemy bomb. Yet they insisted on the money being devoted to the purpose for which it had been collected. The voyage was not without

dangers from storms and submarines and bombers. On one occasion an enemy plane was brought down within a few miles. But the "Ship of the Gospel," as the islanders call it, came through unscathed.

ii

In proportion to their numbers, the toll of missionary dead far exceeds that of the armed forces.

In June of 1942, the Anglican Bishop paid his diocesan visit to Gona to confirm candidates for church membership prepared by the priest there. Four months later news came that this clergyman and two women colleagues had been killed by the Japanese. Later five more were reported captured, and accounts of their beheading followed. All eight were betrayed into the hands of the Japanese by *non-Christian* natives; and with them several American and Australian airmen whom they had succored and were protecting. A more recent report adds a ninth to the list of Anglican missionary dead.

The only American missionaries in New Guinea were representatives of the American Lutheran Church who, since the First World War, have taken over large responsibilities from German societies in the north. Recently, several of them have been rescued from enemy hands. They brought the word that, of their staff of nineteen, seven have been "killed in action," four are still unaccounted for.

Australian Methodists likewise have their roll of honor. Of the twenty-one listed for service in northern New Guinea, seventeen are starred "whereabouts unknown"—the missionary equivalent of "missing in action."

In the Solomon Islands

FOR MANY Americans, the islands of the Southwest Pacific emerged from murky obscurity with dramatic suddenness in August 1942 when the eyes of the world were riveted on Guadalcanal. The tense weeks of uncertainty when the success of that daring venture still hung in the balance, the costly but sure reconquest of the whole Solomon Island group are too vivid in our memories to require retelling. As official communiques and stop-press reports began to be supplemented by personal letters and first-hand accounts from those who had shared in the action, one of the decisive factors in assuring military victory and the safety of countless troops slowly crept into the foreground—the heroic services of Christian Solomon Islanders. Again it was airmen who had some of the most striking tales to recount.

Fliers of the famous Guadalcanal Catalina Squadron were compelled to crash in the jungle. "We decided to pull out in the life-boats. We had just started when eight natives rushed out of the jungle and shouted, 'You come along us. We take safe.' They led us for many hours during the night through the dense jungle. All of us wondered if we were making a mistake, but when the natives started humming 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' we knew we were in safe hands. They gave us a clean hut and a cooked meal upon our arrival at the first village, but we were so exhausted we fell asleep. We stayed at that village for two days. The final night of the expedition ended in a dangerous canoe trip through waters infested with enemy boats, but the natives sent canoes ahead to watch."

First Lieutenant A. M. Hearn was forced down at sea and after drifting three days in his rubber boat was washed ashore on a remote islet to find himself near a village of Melanesians. The natives treated him as an honored guest, giving him the best of everything.

After a few days to rest and recover from his injuries, he was carried to another island where, if ever a plane should come, it would land. The natives were prepared, if no plane arrived, to take the wounded airman by canoe several days' journey to the nearest inhabited island. Lieutenant Hearn reported his experience later to Anglicans in New Zealand, whose missionaries had brought civilization to this island group: "On the second day I found a glass and tooth-brush on my table. I looked at the tooth-brush for some hours; it was not new. Then I said to the boy who waited on me, 'Tommy, is that for me?' (Tommy had been at school at the head-station for four years, and could speak English fairly well.) 'Yes, that is for you.' So I used it. I tried shaving once with the razor brought to me, but I did not try again." Each morning and evening a drum, the beating of a hollowed tree-trunk, was heard, calling the natives to morning and evening prayer.

The famous Marine Corps ace, Major Joe Foss, gives this adventure of one of his comrades:

One day, "Lieutenant [Lowell D.] Grow, [of Huntsville, Utah,] who had been missing for several weeks, calmly walked into camp. . . . He had been shot down . . . and he landed offshore behind the Jap lines. He thought he was close to shore but had a long, exhausting swim before reaching it. He gave up hope several times and nearly drowned. When he got to the beach, he went to sleep, not caring who got him—crocodile or Jap. When he woke up, a native was standing over him with a big club. Grow started to get up, and the native disappeared in the jungle. Grow just crawled into the brush, hid, and went back to sleep.

"The natives found him and led him to a mission when he said he was an American. A father took care of him, nursed him back to health, and allowed him to live at the mission, which was on the other side of Guadalcanal. Grow went crocodile hunting with the padre but didn't get any. The padre did, though."¹

Lieutenant George W. Polk, formerly on the foreign news desk

¹ W. Simmons, *Joe Foss, Flying Marine*, pp. 91-2. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York.

of the New York *Herald-Tribune*, lost his bearings in a driving rain off Guadalcanal, got onto a Japanese-infested island, and hid in the brush. He writes:

"About an hour before dawn I heard voices. My position was in between the roots of a banyan tree; the roots were about four feet high and over me were twined heavy runners and vines. . . . I sat there until almost noon, not daring to stir except to lift myself from time to time in order to twist my head for a peep in the direction of the village. You will know how my heart sank when a lithe brown body suddenly stepped over my position; it was a native. In his hand he carried a three-foot-long knife. He crept away noiselessly and then started doubling back. He came closer and closer to me, cutting grass which he piled in his arms. When his face was some three feet from mine I hissed softly and tapped the vine across my face with my pistol.

"I said softly, 'Stoppa. I kill. Friendly.'

"He looked at me with stark terror in his eyes. Then he said, 'Friendly.'

"I asked if there were Japanese around. He said not near. I asked if he would take me to British or Americans. He said yes. (All of this was in my best Shanghai pidgin English.) He took me to his village and there all doubts that I had concerning friendship were dispelled. Several of the people spoke English well and they explained that the Japanese were some miles away and that I would be taken care of and assisted in getting back to my base.

"I was given food and my numerous cuts were bandaged. A magnificent bushy-headed fellow—six feet and some 180 pounds of him—came and announced that he was a 'British' scouting the Japanese positions to the north. So I told him that I wanted to get to safety as soon as possible.

"We started out and walked some three miles. Then two racing canoes, manned by the most superb boatmen I had ever met, took us aboard and we went speeding down the coast. We got to ——— by nightfall and there every single inhabitant of a 380-person village turned out to meet us. Well, I shook hands with every single person in that village. They were strong black men and nice-looking women. The village was clean and smelled not at all like a native

village. The chief made me welcome and our boats were pulled from the water.

"I was taken by the chief to his house and given clean clothes, the only clothes in the village. Then food was brought—steaming fish, taro, yams. I drank from a long tube of bamboo with one end cut away. While I ate, the people courteously turned away and made small talk. When I finished we had a long conversation and they told me they had sheltered a fighter pilot some three weeks earlier. We had a good deal of fun and I shook hands all around again, and then the local preacher offered a very nice prayer for me, for the War, for the island, etc.

"And let me say that the people, who all joyfully said they were Christians, were Christians; let me say also that the missionaries who had worked among these natives and whom I was to meet later had done an outstanding work among these people.

"I had a wonderful long sleep in the chief's house—especially after he had promised that no Japanese would come within twenty miles of the place without his knowing about it instantly via drum signals. In the morning I awoke to excited whispering under and around me—none in my room, but beneath the house and on all four sides. I sat up and the door burst open as the room filled with people.

"I was by then known as 'Mr. America,' 'Mr. Pilot,' etc. Excited groups brought odds and ends from my pockets to me—piece by piece, and not even a scrap of paper was missing. My clothes were brought. They had been washed and the ragged bottoms cut and mended. I had a quick breakfast and as the racing canoes were held ready the chief took me by the hand and placing his left on his heart he told me gravely that he hoped I would 'crash down' near his village again. He said that he and his people had no guns with which to fight the Japanese, but that they would protect American pilots with their lives. He asked me to take his greetings to the King of America and to tell him that Americans were always welcome."

Captain Sheldon O. Hall, former football star of Findlay, Ohio, was shot down near a Japanese-held island and managed to get into

his rubber raft. For thirty-six hours he drifted helplessly but was finally washed onto jungly Choiseul Island in one of the remoter sections of the northwest Solomons. After some hours ashore, he was found by a group of natives, some of whom spoke English, and all of whom were Christians of Methodist affiliation. They ministered to him for eleven days, while he recovered from exposure, and then led him to an American outpost and safety.

A citizen of Shreveport, Louisiana, reports a conversation with a Marine fighter pilot recently furloughed home:

"Tom bailed out in the Pacific and made it to one of the islands. His feet were badly cut up from walking on coral. The natives took him in charge. He said they had four or five other American boys when he got there. Said they were wonderful to them. In the conversation I asked him what he thought was the reason that they were so kind to the American boys, why they protected them so. He gave several reasons and one of them was that missionaries had done an excellent job.

"Of course, this is a young man and he said he had never given any thought to missionary work. He thought we should let those people over there carry on as they wanted to and it was none of our business. He said that from now on they wouldn't have to ask him the second time for a donation; he now knew what it meant and he felt it had helped save his life and that there were thousands of other Americans who had been cared for by these natives that felt the same way.

"However, he did say that these natives who took care of him were Adventists. But it makes no difference who they were."

When Senator Mead visited the Solomon area with his companions of the Senatorial investigating quintet, he was told this incident, among many, by an American officer:

"Just had some engineers come back from a map-making expedition that spent thirteen days deep in Jap-held jungle territory. Most of the natives the boys saw gave them every aid, because they had been given *Lotu* (*Lotu* being native-language for 'The Word') by Seventh Day Adventist or Catholic missionaries. . . .

"Those blacks up in those islands may rank as primitive but they sure catch on quick. Our engineers found them using hand-grenades to kill fish, and then cooking them in an oven made out of belly-tanks jettisoned from airplanes. But the great shock to our 'wilderness-expedition' was when the natives used to motion them to sit down at about 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. every day, pull out a book and start conducting religious ceremonies. Our boys couldn't read the book—probably it was one of those Bibles printed in the natives' own characters by our own American Bible Society, located of all places back on Park Avenue in Manhattan. It was the same way with their Lotu songs. Apparently they were using their own brand of words, but one of the favorite tunes was clearly 'Onward, Christian soldiers!' Some of the natives, the boys also reported, were wearing religious medals and crucifixes around their necks."²

The service of native Christians to the military operations themselves reenacts the epic of New Guinea. "The success of this campaign depended upon the cooperation we received from the natives and that cooperation was given wholeheartedly and cheerfully by these men who a few years ago were savages," writes an American soldier from New Georgia. "It can't be estimated in figures, the number of lives saved by the tireless efforts of these men. I, for one, would not hesitate to say that in a large measure, I owe my well being to them." And a chaplain adds: "They have rescued countless fliers forced down at sea. They have fed, sheltered, and befriended scores of survivors off sunken ships. Their knowledge of the jungle trails and their uncanny ability to traverse those trails silently and with unbelievable speed make them excellent guides and deadly effective in accounting for the stray Jap patrol or sniper."

But both the real secret and the deeper meaning of what they had witnessed escaped neither of these observers. The lad in New Georgia continues: "A handful of missionaries risked their lives and sacrificed the comforts and luxuries of home to teach these natives Christianity. It was because of this new found Faith and their

² James M. Mead, *Tell the Folks Back Home*, p. 218. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York.

trust in these white men that they worked ceaselessly on behalf of the American army—carrying ammunition and food, medical supplies and water, pointing out obscure trails to make the going easier and safer, and doing so many tasks that would have been left to us. . . . As a token of my appreciation of the wonderful work these missionaries have done, I am enclosing a money order for One Hundred Dollars with the request that it be used for foreign missionary work. To me, this does not seem a gift; rather I consider it a debt of gratitude.” And the chaplain protests: “So foreign missionary activity got the United Nations some effective allies; therefore, it has been a good thing—is that what I am saying? No, of course not. It is what the gospel of Jesus has done for these Melanesian natives who up until a comparatively recent date were a warlike, savage and primitive people. Cannibalism and head-hunting were common practices among them. Their tattooed and disfigured faces and bodies, and the spears and war clubs that many of them still carry, are vestiges of the savagery and darkness from which they have been so recently delivered.”

ii

Now that the recovery of the Solomons is virtually completed, there is opportunity for men in the services to penetrate the interior of the islands, to observe the life of their inhabitants more intimately and under normal circumstances, and to appraise the quality and depth of their characters which had first been discovered under the testing of stress and peril. From scores of similar incidents, only a few can be given.

Marine Joe E. Ross wrote to his pastor in Houston, Texas:

“I had a rather pleasant experience a short time ago that should be of interest. Just happened to drop by a native village, where I understand a short time ago human flesh was considered quite a dish. On this particular Sunday, though, church was in progress. It was nearly the same service you hold there at home, but the entire church was composed of as fine a band of ex-head-hunters as you could ever see. All necessary gear was furnished, and they had been taught to read by the Methodist Mission.

"I have often thought since of the requests for funds for missions and the indifferent response usually encountered. It is really a good laugh on us that we didn't pay more attention to that work. Because of the work of a few men with limited funds at their disposal, American boys several thousand miles from the nearest S. H. Kress store have been received as friends and shown every courtesy a primitive people have to offer. I wonder if it is possible for you there at home to realize how we feel. First trip out—weeks at sea—a landfall and you don't know what to expect. You finally get ashore, and there is a big gang of grinning natives with a tumbleweed haircut passing out pineapples at five cents each."

Some months later Ross added this further observation:

"Easter Sunday these ignorant natives *all* broke out with new clothes and all carried palm leaves. It was hard to believe, but somehow they seemed to be observing some special day. None of us spoke their language, so we had no way of knowing any of their thoughts. Since then, some have learned to comprehend the tongue and learned that these people really knew it was Easter, and had no way of observing the day without the services of some gentleman who seems to have been carried away by the Japs. Of course, they have their own divine services in their own church now.

"There is a plot on a mound here. It is being filled with those white crosses that mean so much and say so little. One day, we found the natives in the cemetery. They were building a chapel overlooking the Pacific. You can't possibly understand what that means. We all look as much alike to them as they do to us. It could be nothing personal. It is just a little shrine built by one people to another because they know and worship the same living God. To the boys that have walked there in the evenings, that shrine means more than they will admit, even to themselves. Somehow it softens the fate of shipmates. I wish you could see it and love it as we do. . . .

"When you see these things and have time to study them in the light of a happy world, it does brighten the day. When we see our chapel on the hill, we know why we are here and lose the desire to leave an unfinished job.

"Maybe you can understand how that little symbol means so

much more than the lady with the torch in New York harbor. This is a token of love from the hearts and hands of a trusting people."

A sergeant tells of a Sunday afternoon visit to a neighboring community:

"A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of going to a nearby island on Sunday afternoon with the chaplain. There is a small garrison of Yanks stationed there for special training and the chaplain conducted services for them. I played the organ for the services. The camp of our boys is located on a lovely bay in a beautiful grove of palm trees. It is small and very well run and is the most ideal spot I've seen over here. After our services had been going about ten minutes, in trouped a whole family of natives who sat down in the front row. This didn't surprise me too greatly but when they joined in the singing with enthusiasm in English—I was a bit taken aback. After the service was over the colonel of the post introduced the family as the native missionary and her family.

"Priscilla—the missionary—had been the white Australian missionary's assistant before he had been evacuated and she now carries on the work. She speaks a very precise English with a most intriguing accent. She is very intelligent and can carry on a good conversation. She showed us her native thatched-roof chapel and explained to us that the men and boys stood on one side and the women and girls on the other. She told us that the congregation was about one hundred and ninety and that there are 'eighty in Christ,' meaning, I presume, those who had been baptized.

"Priscilla's husband understands English but does not speak it. She was dressed in a rather colorful dress and her husband wore a shirt and necktie, a sarong or whatever it is called, and bare feet. . . . The rest of the assortment of children of various ages were pretty skimpily dressed but neat and clean in contrast to the natives that we see here on the island. In back of the chapel is Priscilla's little thatched-roof house. From the outside it looked very clean and neat and has a pretty little flower garden around it and a vegetable garden nearby. The whole mission area is very well kept with the grass cut almost as if they'd used a lawn mower. It was a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon."

On Thanksgiving Day, a group of islanders, learning of the American holiday, prepared a celebration in honor of their guests. It included a native dance and singing by the children. The climax of the occasion is described by one of the American boys:

"We then witnessed something that I do not believe will ever leave our memory. The chief arose and spoke to his people for about ten minutes. He spoke in his native tongue. I understand a little of the language and knew he was giving them a sermon. I later found out though that he had quoted several verses of the Bible by memory. He then faced the soldiers and picked up his Bible and read the same passages in English. I was utterly astounded afterwards when I looked at his Bible—it was in his native tongue and he had translated it as he read along without faltering once. He then led us in a prayer of thanksgiving to close the program.

"I looked around and tried to observe just what was the reaction of the men. I don't think there was a one of us who didn't feel real love and admiration for that black boy. I don't suppose a group of whites have ever before been led in prayer by a man who is generally believed to be ignorant or termed savage. But a few short years ago his people were head-hunters and cannibals.

"When we look at the simple life and the love of God these natives display, it makes you wonder just which race is ignorant or savage."

A somewhat similar incident occurred when an Australian destroyer arrived at a Solomon Island port, after dodging death from the air in several seas. Shore leave was given, and a young Christian sailor found himself free for the day. For weeks, owing to special duty, he had had no time to indulge his favorite habit of Bible reading; so, putting his Bible in his pocket, he resolved to seek a quiet spot and make up for lost time. Seeing a trail running through a forest, he followed it until he came to a quiet spot, and there installed himself. Soon he was immersed in the study of the Word of God. So absorbed was he that he did not notice the approach, until he was already by his side, of a huge, almost naked native, carrying a club. Before he could give vent to any cry of alarm or astonishment, the native, pointing to the open book, said, "That Bible?"

"Yes," replied the sailor. "Me read Bible too—me Christian," and taking the Bible from the sailor, he began to read aloud a chapter of Isaiah, in very fair English. Then, handing back the Bible with a broad smile, he went on his way.

Lowell Cutler, a serviceman from Boone, Iowa, summarizes his impressions:

"The people are so friendly that it amazes us. Something happened here which if I hadn't witnessed with my own eyes I would never have believed. I think it will interest you.

"While at the front line positions, we had about two dozen native workers with us, and it amazed me to see those black people holding prayer meeting every night, singing songs we all know in their native tongue, giving thanks to God in prayer for their own blessings and praying for the American soldiers to be victorious.

"Many a night, as I stood and listened to them, I could feel the pull of God, and my heart would fill my throat and almost bring tears to my eyes. . . .

"The missionaries have really done a job over here, and can never get enough credit for their work. . . . They are usually the last to leave a Japanese-infested area. They go out the back door as the Japanese come in the front."

And a private from Wisconsin gives this picture of the sanctuary where he and his comrades now worship:

"We call our place of worship the Chapel in the Wildwood. There is a small shelter for the altar and pulpit. This hut was built by a group of natives who received a Bible for their labors. It took them several weeks to complete it, but they were completely satisfied with their remuneration. The faith of these natives puts many of us to shame. I wish everyone at home could see what a wonderful job our missionaries have done with this people who were at one time cannibalistic and unruly. I'm sure the pennies and nickels we paid for missions when we were kids are paying us back a hundredfold. Everywhere you read about our job being made easier by friendly natives. Believe me some one had to make them friendly in the first place.

"I heard the story of the chief of those natives who erected that chapel, and he explained just what a terrible darkness his people were in before they were given the Word of God. I believe that if the folks back home could have heard that man's story, you would never have any trouble collecting money for missionaries. I wish I could say that the American people (of whom these natives think a lot) could be half the Christians that these natives are. Their faith doesn't end at the end of the church service. . . . Believe me, they aren't in the least bit backward in owning up to being Christians. They're proud to be one. This native chief goes to four or five gatherings every Sunday to preach the Word of God. His devotion isn't only on Sunday, though, as he holds services every day for his followers. I forgot to mention that this native is proud of the fact that he preaches so many sermons on Sunday that he hasn't time for a meal.

"When I was at home I enjoyed going to church, but I didn't realize how fortunate I was to be raised in a country where God's Word is known and repeated. These natives were living in total darkness before the advent of the missionaries, most of whom lost their lives because they didn't want to forsake these natives when the invaders came."

iii

Chaplains also have been introduced to a new understanding of foreign missions.

A Lutheran chaplain from Montana culls these instances from many contacts: "I have had occasion to conduct a number of services for the natives, and I have talked with many of them.

"'What has Christ brought to you?' I have asked them. I have received several answers to that question. None was quite as eloquent as that single word which came from the lips of a grizzled, somewhat fierce-visaged, old jungle veteran seated on the ground in the rear of the native building in which we were holding our meeting. '*Light!*' was his answer. Yes, light is a precious gift for a man who has lived in a world of darkness and fears, whose rivers are crocodile-infested, sharks in his sea, hostile man-eating tribes and evil

spirits in his jungles, and an eternity of hopelessness before him.

"Timon, the native evangelist, put his hand on the shoulder of the boy standing next to him and answered, 'If it hadn't been for Christ, I would be fighting him instead of loving him.'

"Jason had a good answer too. 'Before, we said bad words, we fell to women, we stole; but now we know our mouth belong em God, and our bodies they temples of the living God.'

"Sixteen-year-old Raymond who was thinking of marriage put it this way: 'Those who love Jesus don't pick their wives the way others do. They ask God to help pick right Mary.' (All women are Marys to them.)

"Timon's prayer was unforgettable. Two Christian men from the Base went with me that night. I asked Timon to open the meeting with prayer. 'Lord, heavenly Father,' he prayed in his broken pidgin English, 'bless the three brethren who are with us this evening. Though they have different bodies, yet they are our brothers, for we all have one blood in Christ.'

"Significant, too, is their love for the Word of God. It has happened again and again that natives have come to my tent, saluted smartly, and asked, 'Me want im New Testament!' Fortunately, I had a large supply with me and I have been able to meet their needs. They gather every evening or morning to read and study that Word together. When they come to the meeting they bring with them their Bible, a notebook, a pencil—and a thirst for the Word. One of the English officers stationed at this native labor camp told me that he had often found them sitting with the open Bible before them, lost in contemplation of the passage they were reading. They would read and reread the passage aloud, laboring over the pronunciation of the words, desperately striving to fathom its meaning. Then they would rise and stand looking off into space, immobile and transfixed, lost in meditation on what they had read, utterly oblivious of everything save the burning desire to comprehend the glorious Truth that was beginning to dawn in their minds.

"My first service for the natives was one of the memorable experiences of my life. Silas, a teacher and evangelist, an intelligent, benign, and soft-spoken man of about thirty-five years, came to my tent and asked me to conduct a service for his boys that evening.

We decided to hold the meeting in a native building which had neither furniture nor floor.

"It had been raining all week, and the area surrounding the native hut was a veritable sea of mud, ankle deep, and the floor of the hut only a little less so. It is difficult to describe what I thought and felt when I looked out across that muddy morass and saw the natives coming. They walked in a single file, Silas in the lead with his Bible, songbook, and notebook under his arm, his face wreathed in smiles. Scantily clad, bareheaded and barefooted, they sloshed along, indifferent to the mud and the rain. Here was a whole congregation of natives, only one or two generations removed from cannibalism, coming to hear the gospel of which I was privileged to be the herald that evening. It is hard to say whether the responsibility or the privilege gripped me most. It was a glorious privilege and a rare experience to hear them sing their hymns, beautifully and in harmony; to bring a message—and they were such eager listeners—and then to have the meeting close with a prayer by one of the natives, a moving prayer for the chaplains, for the success of our arms, and chiefly for the kingdom of God throughout the world."

Another chaplain adds this picture:

"The other day while visiting a native village I met and had a delightful and most instructive chat with the native minister, Alphaus A. Ruramana, a Methodist. He was jet black, and in his abundant head of stiff, bushy hair, in the rippling ebony of his shoulder and arm muscles, I saw in the flesh all that in my mind's eye I had built up as the picture of an honest-to-goodness cannibal. That much of him looked the part. But when Alphaus looked up at me with his kindly expression, when he spoke to me in cultured English, when he generously heaped my arms high with gifts of fruit which he himself had raised, when in every respect he manifested the traits of a mild-mannered and gracious host, I realized something profound had happened to change so completely the life of this man and all the others in the village from their former state of savagery.

"Then he showed me something. He took me over to a native hut inside of which he pointed to an old man reposing on a grass

mat. 'That is our chief,' he said. 'He is about a hundred years old. No one knows his exact age. He was a head-hunter, the only remaining one of our tribe. We are no longer head-hunters.' The tattoos and disfiguring markings on the venerable warrior's body, even though he was an invalid and perfectly harmless now, were enough to make me shudder in contemplation of what he once had been. 'About fifty years ago,' the minister continued, 'our beloved missionary came. He changed things for us.' Alphaus went ahead to tell me the story that has become legend among all the natives—of the difficulties and threats and dangers this first servant of Christ to the cannibals on that island went through. Yet this missionary stood up before it all courageously and by his many kindnesses and his complete devotion to them and their needs he won their hearts—first to him, and then to Christ in him that made him what he was. He left about ten years ago, with an indigenous church fully organized.

"Alphaus had been sent to Suva on Fiji for further education, had been ordained, and now with his family is back serving his people. Each Sunday the church is packed at both the 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock services. Every man, woman and child in that village and in the parish which includes several surrounding islands comes to church. Some have to paddle miles in their small canoes. Their service is dignified and worshipful, and their hymns, which they sing as though they really mean them, are great hymns, universally loved by Christians. They go from the service blessed, and the lives they lead during the week are witness to the effect their religion—the religion of Jesus Christ—has upon them. I felt honored to be asked to preach at one of these services."

iv

It would be wearisome to pile up evidence of changed attitudes toward Christian Missions on the part of American boys who have suddenly come face to face with missions in fact rather than in theory. Here are a few statements culled from letters home:

"Well, Mom, believe me . . . more miracles have happened than seemed possible. In all fairness I must say the missionaries have done absolutely marvelous work among the natives of these islands.

As a result of that work the lives of scores of fliers have been saved. They came back after being missing for weeks with unbelievable tales of nursing care that the natives have given them. Believe me, the real heroes of this war never get their names in the paper."

"Two years ago I doubt if any type of missionary work or study would have interested me; but after actually seeing the poverty and tragic sights I'm ashamed of myself. So many of us back home have been interested in nothing but our own selfish interests, at least I know I was." (A young man of twenty-one.)

"I have had to abolish from my mind the ideas that I had picked up about mission work when at home."

"The experience of men of this division in the South Pacific in active contact with natives who have been Christianized is a revelation of the value of foreign missions more potent and powerful than any of my services and lectures on the subject. We are in daily contact with people who are fruits of missionary labors, not single individuals, but almost the entire population, and their kindness, integrity, intelligence and especially their singing of Christian hymns make us realize that a great and good work has been done for them." (A chaplain.)

"Our missionary service is one to be proud of. I wish some of our skeptical people back home, who frown every time money is collected for the missionary service, could see what their filthy lucre has done for these natives." (A naval seaman.)

"People would feel a lot better about the money that goes to these missionaries if they could see what they have done. It is a lot different from the idea that they are 'cramming religion' into them and teaching them hymns. The people they work with were head-hunters not long ago. Now they are an industrious, honest group on the whole, who may have to come over and evangelize our civilized western world after a bit." (An officer, a man of science, not a member of any Church.)



There could be no more fitting expression of the gratitude of the Solomon Island residents to those who have brought them liberation from their conquerors than the chapel which stands at the heart of the military cemetery on Guadalcanal where 1600 American men lie buried.

"Between ordered rows of palm trees can be seen the bright waters of Sealark Channel—'Ironbottom Bay,' as it is known now—where many of the men who rest here went to their death. Over their carefully tended graves their companions have fashioned headstones, working in concrete and wood, welding shell cases to form crosses, etching plates from messkits and metal from enemy planes. Over the grave of a fighter-pilot, the cockpit-cover from his plane has been erected."

A United Press correspondent gives this description of the cemetery as he saw it in late 1942:

"The site is an open field within view of the Pacific and the purple-shrouded mountains which rise in the background. Palm trunks form a fence bordering the cemetery. A lone green tent stands on one side, where burial services are conducted during tropical rains.

"Nailed on many crosses are aluminum plaques made from mess kits with epitaphs laboriously scratched with nails by some friend.

"'James P. Casey, our buddy and a true marine,' is a typical inscription. Further along the same row on another mess kit is: 'Corp. C. N. Miglin, killed in action 8/20. One swell guy. God bless him.' Draped around one cross is a rosary, rusted and weathered but still with its owner. A beautiful mahogany cross stands over one grave on which a buddy has whittled a fitting tribute to a dead comrade. Others, involving hours of effort, have been fashioned from shell casings. Some are imbedded in concrete.

"It is not difficult to visualize the pain and sadness written into these lines: 'Private G. V. Kisz, the nicest guy I ever knew. May God have mercy on his soul. S. J. Vitka,' carved on brass over one grave. Two palm leaves, laid parallel, were the only floral decoration. Palm leaves on some of the graves are still unwithered.

"Five crosses bear no names, but carry the lone word *Unidentified*. When the war ends it may be that one of these unknowns will be exhumed and moved home to rest eternally under marble and be known as the Unknown Soldier of the Second World War."

But the "lone green tent" has now given place to a memorial chapel presented to the American people as a tribute to their dead. Senator Mead records the impression it made upon him: "The chapel was built completely by the natives here and is perfectly beautiful. The pews are rough board-benches, and the beams and posts are made of bamboo and palm-logs. But the grandly arched thatch-roof rises to thirty feet in the air, and is even equipped with a bell-tower. And the rattan walls are ingeniously woven into designs of the Christian cross. Heard one of their marvellous choirs, made up only of these black boys, lustily sing 'Nearer, my God, to Thee' and other old Christian hymns. They were the same husky lads who built the chapel."¹

It took approximately 4000 natives a little more than two months to construct the chapel. The main body is 90 feet long and 26 feet wide, with a seating capacity of 280. For different parts of the structure native timbers were employed—ambuala for rafters, vatu and norlea for the roof and altar. The walls are carried out in a variegated pattern of crossed matting woven in kwasi-kwasi. It is the finest known example of Solomon Island artistry and craftsmanship. Viewed from the air, it resembles a huge heart, with a cross in the center. The bell-tower surmounted by a carved wooden cross rises above the main thatch roof. The inscription reads:

THIS IS THE HOUSE OF GOD

THIS IS NONE OTHER THAN THE GATE OF HEAVEN

At the dedicatory exercises on September 12, 1943, the presentation was made by Jason, a Christian native, the leader of the Labor Corps. With simple dignity, barefoot and attired in white "lap-lap" or loin cloth and a singlet, he said:

"Me want to tell you all people that all me fella belong Solomon build this church because we want to thank you. We have worked hard and we hope you like this church. And we pray that God

¹ Mead, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

will bless all of you and we hope you will pray for your friends who are lying in this cemetery.

"Also we want to thank all the Americans and Allies who have fought to push the enemy out of our land. Now we give this church to you. But this church no belong to you and me. This church belong God.

"And we ask God to bless us all. Thank you."

After brief dedicatory prayers by two American chaplains, the native Labor Corps, singing "Onward, Christian soldiers" in six-part rhythm, led the audience into the chapel.

II

Now LET us turn the pages of history back less than a hundred years and seek acquaintance with the parents of these Solomon Islanders of today.

As it happens, the Solomons were the first important South Pacific archipelago to be known to Europeans but almost the last to come under the influence of European civilization. As long ago as the mid-sixteenth century, the Spanish navigator Mendana was commissioned by the Governor of Peru to find a southern continent which was believed to lie between America and Asia. Sailing westward across the Pacific some 7000 miles, he sighted only tiny, low-lying atolls until he came upon a cluster of islands whose mountain ranges, densely wooded to their summits, rose to 10,000 feet above luxuriant vegetation fringed by gleaming white sands. Deep lagoons offered excellent anchorages, and well-watered valleys nurtured tropical fruits and vegetables in varied abundance. Touching shore, Mendana found such natural treasures that he was convinced King Solomon must have obtained the gold for his temple here; hence the name he gave these "islands of enchantment."

For two centuries thereafter the Solomons dropped from view. Then occasional explorers again chanced upon them. It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that the white man began to make his presence felt among their residents. As so often, he came first in the persons of that ubiquitous vanguard of western business, avaricious traders and brutal "black-birders," the latter bent on

luring the native peoples away for slave labor. One device of blackbirders was to pose as missionaries. "On the usual question being asked, 'Where shippy come?' they would reply, 'Missionary.' Perhaps they would pretend to sing a hymn very slowly while the hatches would be left open, and several tins of biscuits would be put into the hold. By degrees the natives would come on board, and would be attracted by the biscuits in the hold. When a sufficient number were collected, the hatches would be clapped down, and the natives on deck bundled into the sea, and the ship would sail away immediately." More recent labor recruiters employ a more subtle technique differing little in principle. Movies of the wild western brand are shown to suggest the life of adventure and fabulous gain which awaits the hapless victims whose real future is gruelling toil in virtual slavery as indentured workmen.

ii

In those early days, many a missionary paid with his life because of the bitter wrath of the native peoples at this deceit. The first Christians to visit the Solomons were Roman Catholic Marist fathers in 1845. Their leader, Bishop Epalle, was murdered on the day he landed. In the same year, three of his colleagues were killed and eaten. Within a short time, all of the little band had met the same fate or had died of fever. Roman Catholic effort was abandoned for fifty years.

In the same year that the Catholics were compelled to withdraw, 1852, the intrepid and tireless pioneer of all Anglican work in the South Pacific, Bishop G. A. Selwyn of New Zealand, was skirting some of the eastern Solomons. His successor, John Coleridge Patteson, when a lad at Eton, had been deeply moved by Bishop Selwyn's farewell sermon as he left England. Twelve years later, following a career of distinguished leadership at Eton and Balliol, supplemented by language study in Germany and the mastery of navigation, Patteson joined Selwyn and in 1861 became the first Bishop of Melanesia. For the next decade, this remarkable leader, distinguished no less for solid practical sense, zest for adventure,

scholarly brilliance and wise judgment of men and affairs than for the strength and beauty of spirit which drew even the most hostile natives into his confidence and made him a reconciler among them, sailed in and out among the islands on the Melanesian Mission's seventy-ton schooner, the *Southern Cross*. It was Bishop Patteson who developed the Anglican policy of seeking to bring Christianity to the Solomons from "outside" rather than from "within," by taking native lads off for education and then returning them as evangelists among their own people. It was he who founded the great training center at Norfolk Island, a lonely rock midway between New Zealand and the islands, which had formerly been a convict settlement and then had been given to the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*. Here boys from many different tribes were trained not only in languages and the new faith but also in agriculture and animal husbandry and related practical skills. All through the early decades, most resident work on the islands themselves was accomplished by these young men, supplemented by a few missionaries and periodic visits by the Bishop. It was Bishop Patteson who alone had mastered the vernaculars of the Solomons and gave them their first translation of Luke's Gospel in their own tongue. Wherever he went ashore, his keen ear was attuned to catch the inflections of the innumerable dialects, that he might discover their kinship within what he was convinced was the "great Pacific language." And it was he who finally suffered a martyr's death because of the conscienceless greed of his fellow-countrymen. Mistaken for a "black-birding" as John Williams had been mistaken for a sandalwood trader in New Guinea, he too was murdered. A few days later his body was returned in a canoe to his shipmates offshore. It was pierced with five wounds to symbolize the five natives who had been kidnapped by "black-birders" posing as Patteson's friends. But there was a palm branch in his hand and on his breast was a palm-leaf tied with five knots, presumably placed there by his assailants when they discovered their mistake. Of Bishop Patteson, Max Müller wrote: "To have known such a man is one of life's greatest blessings. In his life of purity, unselfishness, devotion to man, a faith in a higher world, those who have eyes to see may read the best, the

most real *Imitatio Christi*. In his death, following so closely on his prayer for forgiveness of his enemies—"for they know not what they do"—we have witnessed once more a truly Christian faith."

A colleague of Bishop Patteson, Dr. H. P. Welchman, prepared the New Testament in the language of Ysabel Island, the scene of Mendana's original landing. His principal assistant was a native chief, Soga, who before his conversion had attained great fame as the possessor of the skulls of hundreds of his enemies. On Dr. Welchman's death of fever, the British Resident Commissioner said of him: "To the natives of Ysabel his death is an irreparable disaster, and I almost tremble for the future. Personally I feel that I have lost a friend whom I admired and respected, perhaps more than any other man I know, as a true follower of the Master he served, and whose example he followed in every act of his simple, unselfish, self-denying life."

In 1898, the Catholic Marists returned to the eastern Solomons, settling especially at Guadalcanal and nearby.

The western Solomons remained untouched by Christian influence until the first years of this century. "The call that moved the Methodist Church to action came from the Solomon Islanders themselves. The appeal came from natives who had gone to work on plantations in Fiji. There they found their way into Methodist schools and churches, and not a few of them became earnest Christian men. . . . These men, though anxious to return, refused to do so unless missionaries accompanied them, and year after year they appealed to the Australian Methodist Conference to send missionaries." Accordingly in 1902 three white men and nine native teachers from Fiji and elsewhere landed on New Georgia. Year by year, the influence spread to neighboring islands.

Two other missionary groups are at work in the Solomons. The South Sea Evangelical Mission was founded by a remarkable woman, Miss Florence S. H. Young. Deeply moved by the conditions among Solomon Islanders who had been brought to Australia as laborers, she initiated a mission among them there, and when in 1906 they

were forcibly returned to the Solomons in deference to the "White Australia" policy, all the work was transferred thither. This Mission is intensely evangelical, traditional in theological outlook, and maintains its work wholly "by faith" without direct appeal for support.

Seventh Day Adventists, with little relation to the larger Churches, were the last group to send missionaries to the Solomons.

It is a coincidence, but a significant one, that the first six "discoveries" recorded above chanced to be among natives affiliated with these five bodies—Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Adventists and members of the South Sea Evangelical Mission.

iii

Mendana had been overawed by the beauty and riches of the islands. What of their inhabitants? "The people of the Solomons, whom ethnologists classify as Melanesians, have been described as the most treacherous and fiercest head-hunters in the Pacific." "Fighting and butchery are the main business of their life. Their genius shows itself in the weapons they fashion. Arrows, shields, clubs, axes and spears are renowned, not merely for their effectiveness in battle, but also for the nicety of their finish. . . . They also fashion wonderfully good canoes, and finish them with great skill. . . . In their war-canoes they travel long distances in their head-hunting expeditions, and return with ghastly trophies hanging from the mast-head, or from the waists of the conquerors."¹

We have quoted an American soldier writing home from New Georgia testifying to the invaluable services of native helpers and enclosing his gift of \$100 for foreign missions. New Georgia was the landing-place of the first Methodists from Australia in 1902. The leader of the little band of three white men and nine Christian islanders thus describes their welcome: "The natives of New Georgia were, perhaps, the most daring. In their wonderful war-canoes, they went hundreds of miles on their head-hunting raids. They carried off human heads, and living prisoners as slaves. True, these slaves

¹ J. W. Burton, *Missionary Survey of the Pacific Islands*, p. 52, and *The Call of the Pacific*, p. 168.

were well treated, but there was always the fear that when a head was required for the launching of a war-canoe, or human flesh wanted for a religious festival, one of them would probably be the victim. . . .

"All the filthy and degrading customs associated with idol-worship obtained. Sorcery and witchcraft flourished, and the most powerful, because the most dreaded, person was the sorcerer. None died a natural death; all sickness was attributed to witchcraft; and the most revolting and horrible cruelty was practiced to extort confessions from the unfortunate woman charged with the offense. Widows were strangled in order that their late masters might still command their services in the spirit land. The lot of women was a particularly hard one. They were the burden-bearers, doing almost all the work in the villages and food plantations. . . . Under such circumstances the women shirked the responsibilities of motherhood, became skilled in the black arts, and resorted to horrible practices to prevent child-bearing. . . .

"Going through villages for the first time, we found dirt and disease everywhere: filth of every description, bodies covered with skin diseases and ulcers without concealment or dressing, though native doctors were in every village. Men living in idleness and women in drudgery seemed the usual thing."²

We cited the experience of Captain Sheldon O. Hall who was washed onto jungly Choiseul Island after thirty-six hours adrift in his rubber raft, and of the welcome which awaited him. A very different situation greeted the first Christian visitor to Choiseul, adjoining the island where the Roman Catholic pioneers had been martyred, in August, 1904. "On entering into negotiations with the natives of the south end of the island, I narrowly escaped losing my life. In the early days, I had several close calls. In May, 1905, the Rev. S. R. Rooney was put ashore with all his goods. . . . He had a difficult and dangerous task. To land without equipment or arms in the midst of a people noted for their deep cunning and savage character required courage. Mr. Rooney's shelter for the first two weeks was a native hut, 10 feet by 8, with walls 3 feet high.

² John F. Goldie in *A Century in the Pacific*, pp. 561-4, 568. The Epworth Press.

By that time a leaf house had been built. . . . I cannot write of the troubles through which Mr. Rooney passed in those days: the opposition of the tribes, and the attempts made on his life."³

A soldier stationed in the North Solomons mentions a report from some of his companions that "on Vella La Vella the villagers have a fine thatch Methodist Church and a splendid colored minister. Those of our boys who have been fortunate to attend that little island church have given me glowing reports on the fine choir, all natives but trained perfectly in the singing of our hymns." The first white man to settle on Vella La Vella has recently given this reminiscence of the situation when he landed to make his home there in 1907:

"When the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific hoisted the Union Jack in the Solomons and proclaimed the Group a British Protectorate, the natives were gathered together and were told in emphatic language that they must stop head-hunting and widow-strangling, child-murder and cannibalism. They were warned that if they did not give up these vicious customs warships would be sent to them and that they would be punished.

"What happened? Things went on as before—no notice was taken of the Government Declaration. The threat was carried out. Villages were smashed by gunfire; yet nothing seemed strong enough to smash the spirit of the people. The custom of head-hunting had for them a deep religious significance. The more heads they secured in battle the better time they would have in the spirit-world. The terms for murder and bravery in some areas were identical. To be a brave man one had to prove the strength of his spirit by killing, by head-hunting. . . . Intertribal fighting went on continuously. No man trusted his neighbor. Treachery was characteristic."

Shortly before the Methodists arrived, a Government punitive expedition had burned the villages on the site where the mission was subsequently established. The natives were "wild and savage at that time." Their chiefs would hardly have consented to have a white missionary settle among them, but they did request that a native teacher be left. A Fijian Christian was chosen for this lonely

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 577-8.

and precarious commission. He soon made his influence felt throughout the area. He built an attractive native church and gathered a congregation. Within three years he had prepared a favorable welcome for an Australian missionary colleague.

At first progress was dishearteningly slow, life continuously imperilled. "Our missionaries worked for years among the Solomon Islanders before they could even win their goodwill. The people had to believe in the missionaries personally before they would believe in their Message. The natives always carried their weapons with them. Even when it became possible to gather them into a church building they came with their spears, shields and battle-axes. They were not afraid of their missionaries; they were afraid of each other."

Yet this pioneer missionary can continue: "When the War descended upon these Solomons; the natives were, for the most part, enjoying a new life; their social and moral atmosphere had been changed by the dynamic of their Christian faith; they had learned to assimilate the Christian mind and habit; they had experienced the tenderness of Christ's compassion, the depths of His sympathy, the wealth of His love. They were 'new creatures.' What the proclamations of Government and the thunder of warships and the burning of villages could not accomplish, the gospel message has done."

One is tempted to fill in such general statements by countless individual illustrations. Three portraits must suffice, chosen from the Bible class of the founder of all Methodist work a dozen years after its initiation on New Georgia:

"The first to rise is Joni Sasabeti, a young chief of Roviana. He is the eldest son of Liliti, who came to us after our arrival in 1902, and expressed his fears as to the anger of their gods. Liliti's son is a most acceptable local preacher. He speaks of his father's early fears, not slightly, but with loving pity, and he tells how those fears were dispelled. The old man's dying wish was that his son should become a Christian. His experience is as bright as his countenance, and he cheers all hearts as he tells of his confidence in God and his desire to live the Christ life.

"The next is Joshua Sua. He speaks in abrupt, broken language:

'Let my life speak, and let my lips be silent. I am a man of few words,' which is true. 'You all know me, what I was, and what I am by God's grace. When I first heard of the missionary and of the mission schools, I came, thinking that I would soon become a scholar. I was a fool then, and if I have since learned anything it is that my ignorance is greater than I thought. The youngest child in the school easily outstrips me. But, brethren, I came seeking then what I know now to be a small thing, and I found here the greatest thing in the world: the love of Christ.' As the old man speaks, memory goes back to the day he first came to us, axe in one hand, his shield in the other, hair matted with lime, and skin covered with filth; a wild, savage creature, hunted by his fellows for crimes committed. I have watched his life since conversion seven years ago. Earnest, sincere, devoted follower of Christ, his life speaks. He is a living epistle, a monument of God's power to save.

"Nearby, Timoti Loe is sitting ready to speak. I know of no better illustration of the transforming power of the gospel than this young man. He came to the mission eight years ago, a wild, unkempt, uncouth lad, ready for anything from theft to murder. He worked on the plantation under myself, and, though a good worker, was a most difficult lad to manage, always fighting with the other lads. We bore with him for long, till, hearing of some fresh act of disobedience, I told him I should have to turn him off the station. 'Sir,' he said, 'do you really mean to send me away? I have nowhere to go but back to the old life of the villages. I know that I am a bad man, but all that I know of goodness and happiness I have learned with you, and though you may not think so, I am a better man than I was. Within me there are two men fighting for the mastery: the old Loe, fierce, and quick, and strong; and the new Loe, which wants to do what is right. I will not promise you to be better, for perhaps I shall grieve you again by failure. O, sir, can the Christ, about whom you preach, give me the power to be good? Thrash me, kill me, if you like, but don't send me away.' We knelt together in my study, and that day Christ took possession of his heart. Timoti has been my constant companion since that time. He has helped me to establish new mission stations in difficult and dangerous places. He has watched by my side through long and

stormy nights at sea. He has sorrowed with me over the fall of some young convert, and in the spirit of meekness and love has helped to restore such a one. He is a preacher of Christ's gospel, and his life shines forth as an example of the power of that gospel. The change wrought in his life is one of the greatest of moral miracles."⁴

It was on Guadalcanal that the attitude of the Solomon Islanders was first tested. It was there that their bravery, skill and fidelity first claimed the amazement and gratitude of American forces. The natives who made up the Labor Corps, who toiled heedless of peril or reward, and then erected so beautiful a memorial to American dead, were predominantly Anglicans. Behind the events of today, the chronicles of the Melanesian Mission record a dreary sequence of failures and defeats across almost half a century.

On the initial cruise of John Patteson in 1856 Guadalcanal was for the first time touched by Christian white men. On the neighboring Rennell Island, they had been entertained in the chief's council-hall "with twenty-eight skulls on the ridge pole, two of which had been so recently added that they were not yet darkened with smoke." But here there was no welcome. "Guadalcanal was more lawless than most of the other islands; the chiefs seemed to have little or no authority, and were continuously fighting."

It was another thirty years before the next attempt. In 1888 "Guadalcanal was twice visited, the first time entirely in vain; but on the second visit the Bishop (now Bishop John Selwyn) was told by one of the chief men that they were anxious for Christian instruction."

Four years later, a short-lived hope again appeared. "An opening seemed to offer itself in the long closed island of Guadalcanal. Some natives from thence were staying in the Floridas, and were so struck with the effect of Christianity on the lives and habits of the people that they asked for teachers for their own district, and two were accordingly sent; but, alas, the opposition of the chiefs was so vehement that, after two months of waiting and struggle, they were forced to abandon the attempt."

⁴ John F. Goldie, *op. cit.*, pp. 574-6.

Finally in 1894 two intrepid missionaries established themselves on the Guadalcanal coast. "A gradually increasing Christian settlement was springing up around them, and they were hoping to build a Christian village." Shortly thereafter, however, a party of Europeans was massacred and eaten by bushmen of the nearby hills.

In 1897, a visitor to Guadalcanal "found the school there still struggling through the day of very small things, but the missionary and his party were dauntlessly facing, in faith and prayer, the almost insurmountable difficulties raised by the heathen on all sides."

So stood the record at the turn of the century.

From these beginnings has come the Christian community of Guadalcanal today. What might have been the fate of the hazardous American invasion of 1942 if those few British and New Zealanders had not struggled on, almost against hope, in the early days and in the decades since?

iv

We have repeatedly had occasion to note the major part played by Christian natives from other island peoples. Two hundred and fifty miles to the northeast of the Methodist headquarters in New Georgia lay a coral atoll with a number of tiny islets nearby, the whole group only forty miles long. Dr. Goldie describes his visits there in 1904 and 1906. On the first occasion, the hostility was too great to permit a landing. Two years later, "I had with me two native teachers, Semesi Nau, a Tongan, and Pologa, a Samoan. When it was evident that the opposition was as keen as ever, these men offered to remain if I would give them permission. I told them that I could not consent to this, as it was so far from headquarters. I said, 'If I could remain with you I would not hesitate, but I do not care to expose you to risks that I cannot share.' I said that as we would not leave until the following day, they had better make it a matter of prayer, and if still of the same mind I would listen to what they had to say. After prayerful consideration they said, 'Sir, if you will take our wives and families back to the Solomons with you and care for them, we are willing to remain and do our best to win Lua Niua

for Christ.' I asked, had they considered all that this involved? I shall never forget their answer: 'Sir, we have thought of all these things, the distance from help, and the risk, and we have also considered what Christ has done for us. If it is God's will that these things should come to us, our lives are His.' They remained. I gave them a boat and an old sail to shelter them, with provisions and medicines, and left them anchored in the lagoon. It was three months before they got permission to land. They were denied access to the only well of water on the island. An old man took pity on them, and swam out to them at night, carrying green coconuts, which, to the natives, are both meat and drink. The chief of Pelou, an island forty miles away, sent for them, and received them kindly, but the Lua Niua people would have nothing to do with them or their messages. At the end of the third month an epidemic broke out, and the superstitions of the king and priests connected this epidemic with the treatment they had given the two missionaries. After consultation the teachers were brought ashore, and a house built for them. The tide turned in their favour, and in a short time the Lua Niua folk were nominally followers of the *lotu*, and many of them were converted."

By such devotion, the Christian Church in the Solomon Islands as it exists today has been created.

III

THE TOLL in life and property exacted by the South Pacific fighting from these Christians, their churches and missions cannot yet be computed. But occasional glimpses suggest something of its dimensions.

Dr. Northcote Deck, of the "South Sea Evangelical Mission," reports that all the middle bush villages on Guadalcanal are broken up because of the war and the Malaita teachers have been hiding in the scrub. An American aviator who crashed stayed for a time with the missionaries at Nafinua. He attended Sunday services and was much impressed with the earnestness of the native Christians. Recently there were 221 baptisms on Malaita. Many of the regional schools continue to function regularly. At Tulagi, all but six of the

original mission buildings have been destroyed, but new buildings are now going up.

A Marine Corps captain, alumnus of Manhattan College, draws a single picture of a Catholic center:

"It is Sunday down here; I have just returned from Mass, the only event that differentiates Sunday from any other day. The sun is shining brightly; it is hot.

"This morning's Mass was celebrated by a local missionary, Father Wall, who has been out here ten years. Until just a few days ago he had been hiding in the jungle to escape the 'Japman,' as the natives call them. This missionary and several others have been rescued by marine patrols. The others are sick, mainly from lack of food and adequate shelter.

"There is still a nun up in the hills who will be brought down as soon as she is well enough to be moved. She is in very poor condition and probably quite old, as she has been on this island for thirty-three years.

"Patrols have found the bodies of two priests and two nuns who had been killed by the Japs.

"At this morning's Mass there were, in addition to sailors and marines, about fifteen natives. . . . Some of them wore parts of marine uniforms; one had on drawers, another an undershirt, a third was wearing a winter service hat. Their 'skirts' varied in color from bright red to dirty white, and black. All of them went to Communion.

"During the sermon, Father Wall, while trying to control his emotions, explained the effect of our presence on the natives and the missions. Before we landed, the Japanese had destroyed the missions, ruined the native homes, and forced their owners to flee.

"It was impossible for the priests and nuns to carry on their work effectively. They were as hunted animals. It was a terrible setback to them. Our landing gave them a new start. Priests were able to resume their duties in the recaptured areas.

"Just as important as our reconquering the island, the missionary said, was our attendance at Mass, our reception of Communion and our visits to the padre.

"Before we came, the few whites on the island, few of whom were Catholics, and even the Catholics, did not always set a good example for the natives. The whites seldom went to Mass as the natives did.

"The natives sometimes wondered if their religion was practiced by people in the 'great outside world.' When we came to fight their enemy, the 'Japman,' from the mighty, faraway U. S. and attended Mass as they themselves did, they knew then that our Church was Catholic. It is *the* Church."

In many, many instances, no white missionaries were in residence and full responsibility for decision and action fell to the native leaders. From the island of New Georgia, one of them writes to the Methodist headquarters in New Zealand:

"When we had to fly to the forests and mountains, we had to be content with simply holding regular family worship. Every little house became a church, however rudely constructed. It was impossible for us to gather in any great numbers for public worship, but we all felt that God was with us in our homes, although they were only bush shelters. I arranged with the teachers that wherever they found themselves driven, they were to burden themselves with the care of Christ's Flock in that locality."

In the Solomons as in New Guinea, one of the most colorful figures is the Anglican Bishop who refused to leave his diocese at the time of Japanese occupation. A correspondent thus describes him:

"Hundreds of American soldiers and sailors who have served in the Solomons theatre of the war have cause to remember, with gratitude, the cheerful hospitality of the Bishop of Melanesia, the Right Reverend Walter Baddeley, who is now back at his mission headquarters on Florida Island after, in his own words, 'living like a rabbit' on nearby Malaita during the months when the Japanese were unwelcome visitors in this southern part of his diocese.

"His flag flies over what is probably the least pretentious Episcopal palace in the world. It is a leaf hut erected by natives on the concrete foundations of the mission warehouse, which, like all other buildings on the station, was left in ruins by the Japanese.

"Outside this humble but airy abode (whose cool verandah you are likely to find crowded with American servicemen appreciatively devouring generous helpings of fruit salad, in the preparation of which His Lordship proudly specialises) there hangs a wooden plaque bearing the whimsical but defiant legend, 'Bishop's Court, 1942 —?'

"On the hill behind the 'palace' you will see a cluster of leaf and thatch huts which were once, and will be again, the Mission's Theological College for native priests. The principal of the College, the Rev. James Edwards, is back in residence, although it will be some time before the students can be reassembled.

"The Japanese left his house a wobbly skeleton, with neither a roof nor walls, but rows of tightly-sewn leaves now keep out the wind and rain, and, inside, Edwards is 'very comfortable' with two canvas chairs and a camp-bed 'borrowed from the Marines.'

"Daily services are still held in the College's tiny chapel, although many ornaments and vestments stolen by the Japanese have yet to be replaced.

"Those who know Bishop Baddeley's record in the last war (when he was awarded the D.S.O. and M.C., and was for a time in command of a battalion of the East Surreys on the Western Front) will not be surprised to hear that the thought of ordering the evacuation of the Mission staff at the approach of the Japanese never crossed his mind. He was greatly relieved when the Administration also decided to remain, for, as he puts it, 'I didn't want to strike the word "British" out of my postal address.'

"His instructions to all the priests and lay workers in his diocese were: 'Carry on, but evade capture!'

"During the Jap occupation and for some time after the American counter-invasion had begun, it was impossible to obtain supplies of clothing, and the Bishop, when making the circuit of his scattered parishes, had to take with him a native whose job it was 'to sew the soles on my shoes again at various halts along the wayside.'

"Five of his Mission Stations, whose tidy, lawn-fringed buildings and model plantations were the fruit of years of patient labour, now lie wholly or substantially in ruins, the Cathedral has been despoiled, the churches ravished of their beautiful shell-inlaid fonts, lecterns

and altar crosses, fashioned by the hands of native worshippers as visible declarations of their faith. But the spiritual fabric of which these are the mere outward and transient garb is unbroken; for it was reared on foundations which will long outlast the already crumbling empire of the pagan hordes from the north."

No wonder that, when the Bishop was invited to preach to an American unit and the chaplain announced that, on the following Sunday, a box would be found at the door where contributions to his work might be put, a hundred or more servicemen placed \$187 in it. Soldiers from New Zealand likewise have taken steps to indicate their gratitude to new found friends, and their solicitude for grave losses sustained from military action. A press despatch reads:

"A gift of 900 dollars has been made by the members of three New Zealand units in the Solomon Islands to the Methodist Missionary Society of New Zealand. In a letter to the secretary of the Methodist Foreign Mission Board, the officer commanding the units said the gift was from men of probably every creed, faith and Church known in New Zealand and from many 'non-performers.' The natives' only return from the war so far had been the destruction of their hospital and the consequent loss of certain regular medical attention so essential to the maintenance of their health and educational services so appreciated by them and so necessary to adjust their outlook to the impact of civilization. The response to the suggestion that a fund be opened was immediate, said the writer, who asked that the mission accept the amount on the trust that it would establish a bed, beds or small ward to be used freely by the mission and its medical representatives for the treatment of any native regardless of his faith or creed. It was also asked that the equipment be known as a gift to the natives from the units as a lasting appreciation of their courage and loyalty."

Bishop Baddeley himself gives these two occurrences, so sharply contrasted yet so revelatory of the strange vicissitudes of the Christian Church amidst total war:

"I am reminded of an incident some weeks ago when I had the privilege of speaking to a large gathering of American sailors on board one of their great ships serving 'somewhere in the Southwest Pacific.' I had been speaking to them of our people, their history,

their customs, their arts and crafts, and of our work amongst them. When I had finished speaking, the Captain rose from his seat and took my place at the microphone and said such words as these: 'Until some months ago, although I am a Churchman—indeed, have always regarded myself as a good Churchman—I had never had much time for what we call Foreign Missions. I was one of those who felt that there was so much to be done at home that it was even wrong to send men and money overseas. But I must say—and I gladly give my testimony—that what I have seen of these island people here in the South Pacific during these past eighteen months or so, and when I remind myself of the very large number of our airmen who have been shot down or forced down in these islands and have been recovered for further service with their squadrons through the kindness and co-operation of these peoples, and of the numbers of our seamen who have been helped by them, and when I remember that they are now what they are very largely through the work of such men as the Bishop and others engaged in the same work, then I must entirely revise my whole attitude to Christian Missions. And I believe that many other men have done—or will do—the same.'

"Then again, I think of an incident some months ago when a small Japanese patrol came into one of our villages. Some of our lads were standing about, close by the village church. As the patrol came near, the Japanese officer asked, 'Church? Church of England?' And the answer 'Yes' having been given, 'I, too,' was his reply, as he removed his hat and went inside—there (I hope) for a few minutes to be spiritually refreshed before he went on his way again, perchance to give his life in a struggle which was not of his personal choosing."¹

IV

As is prevailingly true throughout the world, these Christian pioneers, both white and brown, builded better than they knew. Only a decade ago, the foremost authority on Christianity in the South Pacific concluded a résumé of the situation in the Solomons with

¹ Bishop Baddeley visited North America in the autumn of 1944.

this somewhat pessimistic appraisal: "The islanders are at present in a very primitive state of spiritual development."¹

Ten years later, on October 22, 1943, the American press carried this despatch from Alameda, California:

"Stanley W. Tefft, twenty-five years old, an aerial gunner from Toledo, Ohio, disclosed today that Christian natives on a South Pacific island had won seven converts among navy airmen who had been shot down in combat with the Japanese. He said the natives were converted by missionaries before the war.

"The gunner, who is at the naval air station here recuperating from wounds, is one of the converts. With two companions, Lt. Edward Peck of Shreveport, La., and Radioman Jeff Scott of Garden City, Kansas, he reached the island on a raft after two and a half days at sea. Four others also were there. For the next eighty-seven days they hid on the Japanese-occupied island, watched over by the natives, whose first act was to give them a Bible.

"'That and our experiences made us Christians,' Tefft said. 'Every night they would gather around us and we took turns reading the Bible. They sang songs which we knew, such as 'Red River Valley' and 'Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny.' The only thing that brought us back was faith. You can tell the world that I am now a devout Christian.'"

3

In Micronesia

TARAWA—Makin—Jaluit—Kwajalein—Eniwetok—Kusaie—Ponape—Truk—Guam—Saipan—these names mark the principal "stepping-stones" on "the best, shortest and safest" military route from the United States to Japan. More than that, they constitute the ideal junction-point for the two great tentacles of Allied advance, one

¹ J. W. Burton, *Missionary Survey of the Pacific Islands*, p. 53.

pressing up from bases in Australia and New Zealand, the other mounted in Hawaii.

This is not the first time that arms from the two principal English-speaking nations have reached across the Pacific from east and south to join hands here. In the late nineteenth century, Christian missionaries, island-hopping slowly and laboriously northward from Australasia, and colleagues from the United States met in Micronesia.

ii

Micronesia ("little islands") is a convenient term to embrace 1500 tiny land dots, all but a few of them too small to appear even as pin-points on most world maps, strewn across an ocean waste roughly 2500 miles in each direction. They lie in four major groups—from southeast to northwest, successively the Gilberts, Marshalls, Carolines and Marianas—"the most mysterious and in many ways the most formidable group of islands on the surface of the globe today."¹ Despite their wide geographical dispersion, the land area of all of them together totals less than 1000 square miles and their native populations only about 80,000.

Spanish explorers were the first westerners to discover these archipelagoes. Magellan visited the Marianas early in the sixteenth century. After the explorers came Roman Catholic missionaries of Spanish orders. For three centuries the greater part of the area was under nominal Spanish sovereignty. But at various times, far-sighted representatives of Britain, the United States, Germany and Japan, eyes intent on military rather than commercial considerations, pressed the strategic importance of these remote and largely unknown pin-points upon their respective governments. The intrepid Commodore Perry, en route to the prying open of Japan in 1853, raised the American flag over the Bonin Islands, the next northerly group beyond the Marianas, and urged the establishment of a chain of American ports along the very route where his present-day naval successors are hewing out bases at such toll of life and wealth.

Since 1898, control of the Marianas and Carolines passed rapidly from Spain to the United States (a temporary occupation), to Ger-

¹ Willard Price, *Japan's Islands of Mystery*, p. 8. John Day. Used by permission.

many, to Japan, and now back into American hands. Germany had long coveted outposts in the Central Pacific, and had been confirmed in her claim to the neighboring Marshalls by a Papal decree in 1887. When Spanish ownership of the two westernmost groups was threatened during the Spanish-American War, the Germans entered into a secret agreement with Spain for the acquisition of such islands as could be kept out of American hands. At the war's conclusion, the United States retained only the Philippines and Guam, and restored the rest to Spain, who promptly sold out her stake in the Pacific to Germany for \$4,500,000. Following the Spanish example, a certain number of German missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, entered Micronesia. Within a few days after the beginning of World War I in 1914, Japanese naval forces beat the British to the islands and ousted the Germans. One month before America's entry into that war, Japan and Britain sealed a secret compact to divide the spoils along the line of the Equator. Here, as at so many points, the Versailles Conference confronted a *fait accompli*. Lip service was paid to the principle of self-determination by sanctioning the agreed division under the form of mandates, whose terms were always disregarded in practice by Japan and openly flouted by her after she withdrew from the League of Nations. Only Japan fully appraised the value of these infinitesimal and largely barren atolls in an age to be increasingly dominated from the sky rather than from the land or the sea. Among the 1500 islets, Truk alone offered generous anchorages for a major naval base. But scores of coral reefs and sheltered lagoons scattered over the vast length and breadth of Micronesia required little more than installations to furnish ideal plane bases. "These islands are made to order for Japan," declared Admiral Suetsugu. "They are naturally built aircraft carriers. . . . In fact, the Pacific equilibrium can be maintained only when Japan holds them." Micronesia is "the key to the Pacific." Great Britain had annexed the Gilberts in 1892.

The successive conquerors left their mark upon the native populations by an increasing admixture of various strains of European blood. But all through the kaleidoscopic changes of political rule, a tiny band of American missionaries, mainly Congregationalists, left a mark upon the peoples of the islands far more profound, wholly

constructive and, as is now apparent, far more significant for their destiny in the second quarter of the twentieth century.

iii

By 1850, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had in thirty years virtually completed the evangelization of the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands, and was eager to pass direction into the hands of the indigenous Church. What more natural than that the missionary energies of this new Church should be projected westward across the Pacific toward the islands which lay nearest, although 2500 miles away, and that it should be a joint undertaking of Americans and Hawaiians? In 1852 a very modest beginning was undertaken. Three New Englanders and their wives made their way around Cape Horn and, joined at Honolulu by two Hawaiian colleagues, touched first in the Gilbert Islands and then passed on to establish headquarters at Kusaie, easternmost of the Caroline group. Five years later, their appeal for reinforcements won response. The Sunday school children of churches connected with the American Board raised \$28,525 to build and equip a mission ship, the *Morning Star*—the first of five successive vessels of the same name provided in the same fashion. On her maiden voyage to Micronesia came the Rev. Hiram Bingham, Jr., son of a pioneer missionary to Hawaii and father of the former Senator from Connecticut, and Mrs. Bingham. It was decided that they should start new centers in the Gilberts. Thus was begun a lifework of Christian service and scholarship among the most notable in recent annals.

In the next two decades, Christian influence was extended from island to island, not only throughout the eastern Carolines and Gilberts, but also among the Marshalls, largely through the labors of native Christians. On Tarawa were located two Hawaiian missionaries. To Truk went a Gilbert Islander whose name, Moses, was inspired by the fact that he had been born on a canoe which had drifted out to sea. In the Mortlock Islands, south of Truk, leadership was taken by a native princess from Ponape, Opatinia, and her husband "whose high character and service made their names glorious among the Micronesian churches." At the tiny islet of Pingelap, the native king, under duress from white traders, forbade entrance.

But two of his own subjects, who had strayed to a nearby center and had studied with the missionaries there for some months, returned home as Christians and took advantage of their high rank and influence to establish a school and teach Christianity. Two decades later, a visitor could report: "The inhabitants, formerly naked savages, are today a crowd of well-dressed people. They have planted their island with coconuts till it looks almost like a huge coconut tree. The women have learned to braid hats, which they sell to the traders, so that almost every family has a hand-sewing machine. Almost every one on the island can read and write, and all are nominal Christians. No white teacher has ever lived among them."

Professor Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard, now touring the scenes of recent American victories as official historian of the Navy, has not exaggerated the hazards and handicaps of the early ventures: "It took courage to plant missions on these islands, at that era. The people were bellicose and liable to murder the crew of any vessel that offered plunder. They had been given plenty of provocation by visiting whalers and rascally traders. . . . These early missionaries, armed only with the Bible and a faith in human nature, entered islands notorious for cutting out trading schooners and murdering all hands. They lived for years on native food and such salt horse and flour as they could import at long intervals. They built boats and sailed in them or in native canoes to other islands, never knowing when they might be murdered."

Happily, in contrast to the prevailing situation among Pacific islands farther south, the native chiefs often offered a cordial welcome to strangers who brought teaching and healing and sincere friendship among their people. Nevertheless, the difficulties were well-nigh overpowering. "The Micronesians were all liars and thieves. They were, in the main, approachable and friendly, markedly kind to strangers; at the same time cruel and revengeful by nature and sly in their petty thefts. Their religious ideas, though varying in different sections, were vague and superstitious; they had no formed idols, but set up stones in honor of spirits, with whom they sought to communicate. To them the air was swarming with these spirits, who returned to the earth in human form and wrought injury.

Their gods were not loved or esteemed, only dreaded; all they asked of them was to be let alone."¹

One of the original band confessed his disheartenment: "The people were nearly naked, sitting or lying around in their huts or in the sun, filthy as possible, appearing more like apes than human beings. I thought I was prepared for all the hardships I should meet, but the question came to me again and again, 'How can I endure life for months and years amid such surroundings as these?' And my heart went down, down, lower than my boots!"² And six years after his arrival in the Gilberts, Hiram Bingham was compelled to report: "Our two converts have gone back to heathenism; others for whom we entertained great hope have grown cold, and there is not a native of Apaiang or Tarawa upon whom we may look as a friend of Jesus."³ Even fifteen years later, while no white missionary was resident in the Gilberts, one of the four church members on Tarawa who had been slain in battle was eaten by savages, and the head of another Christian, known as King David, was cut off and carried away in order that its teeth might be fashioned into neck ornaments.

The more harassing difficulties arose, however, from that ever-present scourge whose sordid greed and depraved character have spread a curse of disease and distrust more virulent than any epidemic across the face of the earth in the pathway of Christianity and civilization—the white trader. Willard Price reports that "he businessed me" became the native English expression for "he cheated me"; and since American traders were always fighting, a native would threaten another by warning, "I'll Merikan you!" The pidgin English taught the Micronesians was so vile, so devoid of words useful for education, that the first missionaries were compelled at once to master the native dialects and conduct instruction in them. On some of the lesser islands, traders incited native leaders to persecute or prohibit missionaries. Two years after the first beginnings on Ponape, a violent ravage of smallpox, spreading from infected sailors thrust ashore there by a passing vessel, decimated half the population. After the smallpox came fire, destroying the

¹ William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board*, p. 234. The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

mission house and its contents. After fire came intertribal war. But the climax was capped by resident Westerners. "Brothels kept by these foreigners were an open affront. Once church services were interrupted by a band of these men with loaded muskets, trying to recapture some girls who had escaped from one of their establishments." Almost contemporary with the arrival of the American Board pioneers was a great increase in "black-birding." The most notorious leader was "Bully" Hayes from Cleveland, Ohio, whose depredations upon Kusaie, headquarters of the Mission, threatened all on the island until he was deported by a British warship.

To this catalogue of ills which rivalled Job's curses must be added the hazards of natural catastrophes. Twice tornadoes almost swept Kusaie bare. In the same year a tidal wave caused great loss of life and property in the Marshalls. The instability of the coral floor constantly threatened the tiny settlements where whole islands might disappear overnight and new atolls as suddenly emerge.

Finally, the rapid changes of political sovereignty spelled uncertainty not only for the inhabitants but also for their American friends. For the first thirty years they were comparatively free of European political interference. Then, in 1887, a dispute over ownership between Spain and Germany was carried to the Pope. He sustained the Spanish claim to the Carolines but acknowledged German rights over the Marshalls. This stimulated a far more vigorous colonial policy by both disputants. Spain imported soldiers and convicts as well as Catholic missionaries. The Spanish Governor announced, "No one will be troubled by his beliefs in the truths of religion." Yet within four months, only two of the nine schools on Ponape remained open. A member of the Mission wrote: "Never was the island in so good a condition as when the Spanish came. The work never prospered so well as during the past year. Now the wreck that has been made in these three months seems almost incredible. Schools closed, church services discontinued, natives encouraged to manufacture intoxicating drinks, and we live in hourly expectation of orders to close the boarding-school." Forebodings were more than justified. Before three years had passed, the leader of the Mission had been imprisoned in Manila, the mission buildings destroyed, the church burned to the ground, and the American missionaries

banished from Ponape. In the Marshall group to the east of the Carolines, German governors were alternately favorable and hostile. Even the declaration of British suzerainty over the Gilberts worked initial disadvantage. When Spanish sovereignty sold out to Germany, the new government expressed its desire that mission work be carried on by German citizens or those with a German background (e.g., German-Americans). American missionaries were gradually turning over their work to German Protestants when the sudden seizure of the Marshalls and Carolines by Japan at the outbreak of the First World War presented new and unprecedented problems. At first, the attitude of the new owner was sympathetic toward the American teachers, while a Japanese Protestant missionary society took over the German work when the German missionaries were deported. But the ever-tightening net of secrecy which Japan spread over Micronesia made the presence of foreigners increasingly unwelcome. Between 1939 and Pearl Harbor, all but one of the few remaining American Board representatives were withdrawn. Yet through all the changes, friendship for Americans continued strong, and a jubilant welcome greeted their missionaries whenever they managed to return.

iv

Under such varied vicissitudes, Christianity came to Micronesia. Nevertheless, it took root and spread, partly under the guidance of American missionaries, but mainly through the labors of Christians of brown skin, first Hawaiians and later Micronesians themselves. On the twenty-first anniversary of the arrival of the first American and Hawaiian band, they could report that three widespread archipelagoes had been occupied; four of the multitudinous native dialects had been reduced to written characters; 2,500,000 pages of Scripture and school-texts had been provided in these languages; twenty churches numbered 1000 members whose monthly missionary gifts totalled \$1000; "and beyond all figures or exact measurements, a new ideal of life had been set forth, before which the old pagan rites and superstitions were yielding ground and a better civilization taking their place."¹

¹ Strong, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

By 1930, three-fourths of the population of the Gilberts were Christian, 43 per cent Protestants, and 35 per cent Catholics. In the Marshalls, Carolines and Marianas, about half of the native people were Christian, with the ratios between Catholics and Protestants about the same.

All this was finding its most striking, and ultimately far and away its most significant, illustration in that type of evidence by which alone Christianity measures success and upon which its whole hope is rested—individual lives transformed at their core and themselves become the bearers of its growth. A corps of native Christians, many unnoted at the time, was being formed against unforeseen testing.

Through the latter years of Japan's militarization, it became almost impossible for any foreigner to visit the islands under her rule. Through the screen of censorship and silence few reports reached the outside world. Little was known of what was happening to the Christian communities. Two of the very few Westerners to penetrate the Japanese interdict were Willard Price, American journalist, and his wife, who visited many of the islands in 1935. Let us glance at four pictures he paints, each of a locality now of major military importance.

Price did not get to the Marshalls. But he talked with many officials and natives who had recently been among them. After summarizing their political fortunes, he goes on:

"That is the official history. Unofficially, it was the Americans who actually had most to do with the islands before the Japanese came. Not that the American record is one to be particularly proud of. Syphilis and tuberculosis were the gifts of the whalers. They made drunken murderous forays upon the natives. American ships became most unwelcome and many were destroyed by the angry islanders. Innocent crews suffered along with the guilty. An unoffending captain was picked up bodily by a great chief and his brains dashed out against a rock. Sailors were decapitated.

"Then the ship named *Morning Star* arrived. It was a beautiful sailing clipper. The captain called for canoes to tow the ship into the lagoon against the strong tide. The natives dutifully performed this service, craftily planning later to destroy the ship and kill all on

board. But the king intervened just in time. He had heard of the *Morning Star*—it was the ship of mercy paid for by the pennies of Boston children, and its passengers were the first missionaries to the Marshalls.

"The net result of American influence upon the Marshalls has been more favorable than we would have a right to expect. A Japanese official complained to me, 'The Marshalls people can't get their minds off America. They call it their adopted country.' The governor of Jaluit said, 'Until we can stop American mission education and replace it with Japanese education, we can never turn the natives our way.' And a native chief commented, 'When the Japanese don't treat us right we go to the Americans. They talk with the Japanese and fix things up.'"²

Price was forbidden to land at Truk. But he was smuggled ashore in this fashion:

"A handsome Polynesian climbed aboard. He stopped short when he saw a white man, then came to me, all smiles.

"'You are American?' he asked eagerly. 'For twenty years I have not seen an American. My name is Fal. I used to be a chief—now no more. There was an American missionary here. His name was Logan. That was long ago, before the yellows came. He was a father to me. He taught me English. He was good to my people. I swore I would do anything for an American. You will come to my home?'

"'If you can get us off quietly,' I said. 'The captain wouldn't want us to land.'

"He looked around. 'Everybody is up forward. Go aft. I'll have my boat there. It has a little cabin. Slip into the cabin and no one will know you are aboard.'

"In ten minutes we were flying toward shore in Fal's big outrigger sailing canoe."

Then followed a week of observation and adventure:

"The Japanese town is on the eastern end of Dublon. The houses cling to a hillside, facing Eten Anchorage. Climbing through the town and descending into the valley behind it, one passes a school

² Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-6.

(for Japanese pupils only) with gateposts inscribed with the names of those Japanese citizens who contributed to build it and the exact amount given by each, a rather tacky *shikenjo* or experimental garden, a fine hospital in a charming garden, an airfield and radio station, a conspicuous hill on which the *shicho* or governor's headquarters are an inviting target (if this building had been erected by the Japanese instead of by the Germans it would have been artfully concealed in a valley), and comes at last to a fine church on the far edge of the three-mile-wide island.

"This was a Christian church built by Americans of whom no trace now remains except the grave of Robert W. Logan, missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who translated the New Testament into the Truk language—and won for America the undying friendship of men like Fal. Our native friend was silent as we visited this grave near the house of the vanished Americans on a lovely hill overlooking the sea.

"Fortunately the education of Truk was not left to the American whaler. Thanks to American and European missionaries, practically all the 16,000 natives of Truk are Christian and friendly to people of other Christian lands. They will not take up arms, having none. They have been disarmed both materially and spiritually. But they will give refuge and comfort and silence where needed to the friendly invaders.

"It is now safe to tell of Fal's trick upon his Jap masters, for he is secure in the Polynesian heaven. He escaped from the Micronesian islands to the Solomons where American boys reported him and other brown chiefs fighting at their side. He fell fighting."³

At Ponape, the Prices again came upon the trail of earlier American visitors:

"It is interesting that the first white men to take up residence on Ponape were Americans. They were missionaries of the American Board and they came in 1852.

"The next visitors were also Americans, but not bound on so holy an errand. They were New England whalers, coming ashore to raise hell with native women. But they met their match in the war-

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 177, 182, 190.

riors of Ponape and soon chose easier conquests on other islands. Therefore the Ponapeans do not remember Americans with bitterness, but rather with a certain degree of affection since the missionaries did them no harm and some good. . . .

"The Spaniards were comparative late-comers. It was not until 1886 that the Spanish flag was raised at what was called Ascension Bay, now Ponape Harbor.

"The Spanish Capuchin priests did not get on well with the Americans. In 1887 Mr. Doane, head of the American Board Mission, was deported to Manila.

"Two weeks later the resentful natives rose in a massacre of Spanish soldiers and their Filipino mercenaries, captured the fort and killed Senor Posadillo, the governor. . . .

"The Ponapeans cling to their language and their ways more zealously than any other Micronesians with the exception of those of Yap. They have resented and resisted the Spaniards, Germans and Japanese. They gave their hand in friendship to the Americans because Americans never exploited them. We can thank the missionaries if the day of opportunity finds the Ponape warriors ready to fight for their own freedom in confidence that that freedom will be preserved under whatever administration is later provided for the Pacific islands."⁴

Finally, the Prices arrived at Kusaie, for so many years the center of American Board labors in Micronesia. "Americans have had a good deal to do with Kusaie. Americans damned it; Americans redeemed it.

"Kusaie was discovered by Americans in 1806 and named Strong Island after the governor of Massachusetts. Thus whaling captains of New England learned of the island and thereafter made its beautiful harbor a rendezvous.

"I can remember seeing twenty-two whaling ships in this harbor at one time," King John of Kusaie later told me.

"The whalers indulged in wild orgies on shore, abducted Kusaie women, and left a legacy of foreign diseases. The population dwindled from about two thousand when first discovered to two hundred in late Spanish times.

⁴ Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-6.

"When the American buccaneers of the whaling fleet had done their worst and only a pitiful remnant was left of the Kusaie people, there came other Americans, also buccaneers in a fashion, and also from Boston, to repair the damage done by their countrymen. . . .

"For eighty-four years missionaries of the American Board of Boston have been at work in Kusaie. Let us go ashore and see the results.

"We are taken off by Arthur Herrman, lone American planter, the first American we have met in all the Japanese islands.

"We walk down the village street through a sea of seraphic smiles. There are low bows and soft good mornings. All the inhabitants are in long white robes as in the realms of the blest. Houses are so neat that they ache. Music drifts about—whistled, hummed, twanged—hymn tunes familiar in New England churches.

"I've arranged for you to stay with Miss Hoppin," says Mr. Herrman, 'because you wrote you wanted to see something of the natives. Around my house you wouldn't see anybody but Japanese. But the natives are at Miss Hoppin's all the time. I suppose you've heard of her—white goddess of the South Seas, they call her. She's just about God to them, and no mistake. Her slightest wish is law. If I want anything of the natives I have to work to get it and pay well for it. Anything she wants she has only to mention. They would do anything in the world for her. So would I for that matter—I'd give my right hand for her.'

"When you catch a tough old planter ready to give his right hand for a missionary, that missionary has something. Who is this paragon? If we are expecting to meet a looming, booming personality we are mistaken. A cunning little old lady, as neat and bright as a new pin, her gray hair encompassed in a coronet of snow-white shells, awaits us on a bit of an islet just big enough for her and her house in an enchanting grove of palms, mangoes, papayas, banana trees, breadfruit, scarlet hibiscus and lavender bougainvillea. This world of loveliness is not two hundred feet from shore to shore. It is connected with the main island by a grass-grown causeway. Over that causeway stream the natives day and night; coming to bring coconuts, or coming to get medicine, or just coming.

"A snatch of breakfast, and it is time to go to church. We find the

white church on the shore of Lele already occupied by a thousand people. The king leads the singing. The most blasé visitor must feel a tingle run along his ribs as these thousand trained voices take to the air. The volume and beauty of it is so great that one would not be surprised to see the sheet-iron roof go sailing off into space. Then the native minister, in high-collared white drill suit and bare feet, preaches. Through the open windows we can see the ship, waiting for stevedores. The stevedores are all in church. The service is long. When the last prayer is finished and we make to rise, the king, who sits beside us, whispers, 'Now, Sunday school.'

"No one leaves. It is not until nearly one o'clock, after three hours of services, that we pass out and some of the men answer the insistent whistle of the steamer. But they must work fast, for there is another service at three and another at five. Double pay cannot induce them to miss a service.

"There seems to be nothing fanatical about Miss Hoppin. In fact her creed appears to be solidly grounded in gastronomics, long recognized as one of the foundation stones of religion. Jesus fed the multitude. Every native who comes to Miss Hoppin's house gets fed. Incidentally, he always brings something to feed Miss Hoppin . . . so it works both ways. The natives have converted her to their interests as thoroughly as she converted them. She has become their champion against all injustice. Several petty officials were discharged because of her complaints of their harshness toward the natives. One, sent back to Japan, committed suicide. After that she complained no more. 'They do the best they can,' she said. So, instead of lodging complaints against them, she fed them too."

Alongside this picture of one of the American Board missionaries may well be placed a portrait of the king of Kusaie:

"Once an island dreaded for its savagery and brutality, where shipwrecked strangers were sure of prompt death, where a king and his henchmen were carried in their canoe to a great hole and buried alive, where American whalers murdered and were murdered, where American ships were sunk in the harbor, where disease and violent death reduced the population from two thousand to two hundred, Kusaie is now an unbelievable isle of twelve hundred angels.

"In olden times murders sometimes scored one or two hundred a year.

"How many murders a year now?' I asked the king.

"He smiled. 'There has not been a native murder in my lifetime,' he said. The king was sixty years old.

"How about minor offenses? How many cases of detention in your jail in a year?"

"Jail!' exclaimed the king. 'But there is no jail!"

"Well,' I said, 'whatever you call it. You must at least have some place to put the tipsy ones until they sober up.' In all islands that I had visited infraction of the liquor law was the most common offense and the jails were always well patronized by alcoholic convalescents.

"But there is no drinking on Kusaie."

"I thought he meant relatively none, only a few cases a month. But he went on to explain that no native had been known to taste alcohol in the past thirty years.

"I myself drank and smoked when I was a young man,' he said, 'but not since. If anyone drank now every man's hand would be against him.'

"And smoking is under the ban too?"

"Tobacco does not sell well here, although I am sorry to say that a few of the young men smoke. I have told my sons that if they smoke I will throw them out of the family.' He said it with a broad smile expressing his easy assurance that it would never be necessary for him to carry out his vow.

"Marriage is a sacred institution on Kusaie. Divorces are unknown. I am speaking of course of the natives, not of the Japanese newcomers.

"There is no house of ill fame. There is practically no disease. There are no native medicine men, no charms or other superstitious devices to ward off illness, and the Japanese doctor goes fishing. Native physique is splendid. Poling develops the arm muscles; and standing braced in the canoe, the leg muscles. When the Japanese came, wrestling matches were staged between Japanese and Kusaieans. Such matches are now forbidden, for the native men always won and the rulers lost face.

"Every day is Christmas. Gifts flow back and forth with the regu-

larity of the tides. A taro pudding goes next door with compliments and a five-pound crab comes back. The visitor shares in the bounty. No one would take a penny for board, for the canoe that we sailed, for any of a hundred favors. But gifts were expected and accepted. Unaware at first of the custom, I lent my best shirt to the king when his had been soaked by the rain. He assumed it to be a gift, and wore it on the day we left as a special sign of his appreciation.

"Service is exchanged for service. I build your house and you deliver my child. I do your fishing as well as my own and you do your farming plus mine.

"Poverty is not allowed. Those who have give to those who have not when typhoon wipes out a plantation or accident deprives a family of its providers. Orphans are promptly absorbed into other homes.

"Christian Kusaie even sends out missionaries to heathen islands round about. A native evangelist had been dispatched to Palau and another, during our stay, was waiting for a ship to take him to Enewetok. He ate at our table daily, toothlessly, explaining that he was saving his false teeth to use in primitive Enewetok where the foods are so hard.

"The king refused to allow his people to work for their Japanese masters on Sunday. Japanese officials argued with him in vain. One Saturday they undertook to wring consent from him by force. He was detained all day in the government office and subjected to 'questioning' which is accompanied by the liberal use of burning cigarettes applied to the flesh. The natives gathered outside the office and were about to rush the place when an official came out on the porch, saw the crowd, and hastily reported to his superiors. The king was released.

"His people still went to church on Sunday.

"The king's blood was truly royal. For centuries his family had provided the people with kings. The result was an inherited poise and manner, a regal gentlemanliness, in contrast to the brisk, brusque ways of some foreign petty officials of common family who had been trained but not bred.

"Anyone who wishes to take a few lessons on how to do the right thing upon every occasion should visit and study King John

of Kusaie. He wielded knife and fork with as much skill as his paddle—and that is saying a great deal.

“When he operated a canoe the canoe seemed to be a part of him. It is the office of a king in these islands to be able to do everything superlatively well. King John, although sixty years old, was powerful, broad of chest, and could swim, spear, paddle, with the best. The native canoe is no birch-bark zephyr. It is a hollowed log, heavy and unwieldy. It would turn over in a twinkling were it not for the outrigger. . . . And yet the king could make that tree skim over the surface as if it were a leaf.

“The king clung to the old ways, with one exception.

“He had a pocketful of calling cards and delighted in handing them out. He gave me one. On it was printed, ‘K. J. Sigrah.’ Sigrah was his family name.

“‘What does the K. J. stand for?’ I asked.

“‘King John.’

“And when the first Yank lands on Kusaie I can wish him no better luck than to be handed a card bearing the noble name, ‘K. J. Sigrah.’”⁵

II

Now, once again, Americans are discovering Micronesia.

From Abemama in *the Gilberts*, just south of Tarawa, comes this quaint picture of life among Roman Catholic Christians on that island during the year of Japanese occupation. The story is told by Corporal Jack E. Ely, Marine Corps photographer from Lowell, Washington:

“There were lights at St. Michael’s Mission at Monaku in the Gilbert Islands last night, and Father Paul Mehl, the 73-year-old French priest there, said his natives were singing for the first time in 18 months. If it weren’t Sunday, Father Mehl said, he was certain they would dance; but tomorrow was Monday, and Father Mehl smiled.

“The Japanese, who had invaded Monaku in September, 1942, had

⁵ Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–23.

all been buried by the natives. This was as the Japanese had wished it, Father Mehl said, for had they not shot themselves when the Americans came, having ordered the Gilbertese to prepare their graves?

"Father Mehl was not glad the Japanese were dead, for he was a man of peace, and in 50 years among the Gilbertese (who had once been among the most warlike tribes in the Pacific) he had taught them that that was not a good thing; but he could at least be happy that the Americans had arrived.

"And Father Mehl was glad, for the 'younger' priest, Father Ernest Sabolier, who had been in the Gilberts only 30 years, said he was walking for the first time in nine months, and he was sitting up much later than anyone had known for the last 10 years.

"Best of all, Father Mehl said he liked it because the Americans were singing, too. They were Marines, he had been told, although Father Mehl was not very certain about such military matters. They had come, 80 of them in all, to his little Catholic mission at Monaku that morning, and they had sung with his natives. Tonight, they were singing again, and Father Mehl smiled.

"The Marines had come to the mission tonight when they heard the natives begin their songs, and they had brought lights with them. They were only kerosene lanterns, but they were the first lights that had been seen on Abemama atoll in many months, longer than Father Mehl liked to think, and the natives, who had been afraid to break the rules the Japanese had laid down for them, went back and got their own lanterns, and then there was much more light.

"It was all so different, for the Japanese had been afraid of light while they were on Abemama. The Japanese were afraid of many things. . . .

"Father Mehl had not been happy while the Japanese were on Abemama. He could say that—and he did say it—without being un-Christian. The Japanese had tried to be courteous, but things were always so strange, and it had been difficult to keep the school going. They had made a strong point about not teaching English, and they were always snooping. Yes, that was the word, and Father Mehl used it. It was not uncharitable, for the Japanese *had* snooped.

What would you call it when they came into the school and sat for hours, saying nothing? The Sisters were Australians, and the natives were afraid of the Japanese, and it made work very difficult. The Sisters had given their word that they would not teach English, but Father Mehl knew that the Japanese had not believed them, and he did not think it very charitable of the Japs.

"Father Mehl had been afraid—yes, he would confess it—when the Americans came. But not as frightened, perhaps, as the Japs had been. He had remembered back to the day once before that the Americans had shelled Abemama. They had produced great havoc among the Japanese—but that was war, was it not?—and the troops had lost everything they had. They had come to the natives and taken all their food and their mats and their clothing, and things had gone very bad with Father Mehl's students. He was afraid that would happen again when he heard there were American ships in the sea.

"Then the nice young captain had come and very courteously told Father Mehl that he was going to kill all the Japanese on Abemama, and it would be best for him to go back into the jungles. Father Sabolier and Brother Wilcomm had helped him leave the mission, and there had been much firing, and then the boys had told him the Japanese had killed themselves.

"And tonight, there were lights at the mission, and there was singing, and Father Mehl would be very surprised if there were not dancing tomorrow night."¹

ii

Many of the pictures from *the Marshalls* where Japan had ruled for almost three decades and only one missionary was left in 1941 appear in somber shadings. Chaplain Yaeger, a Lutheran from Arlington, Va., gives this account:

"The Micronesian natives of these islands are Christian. Their lot under enemy rule was not a happy one. Many families were separated and deported to other islands in the atoll. On many islands the natives were restricted in their worship. After the departure of the missionaries, an elder or chief acted as lay-preacher and directed

¹ *Catholic Digest*, March, 1944.

the religious life of the people. When the Japanese military took over, the natives were told with dictatorial finality: 'Jesus is dead.' An effort was made to confiscate their Christian literature, but the natives managed to hide a few copies of hymnals and Holy Scripture. During the Japanese occupation this limited supply of literature was used by the elder from time to time for secret instruction. Small groups of natives were taken to secluded spots for Christian instruction. It is no wonder then the natives said, 'When the Americans come, Jesus will return to the islands.'

"After the battle, the natives on the southern end of the atoll were gathered together on one island. Our troops provided food and clothing and assisted in their rehabilitation. An opportunity to extend the hand of Christian fellowship presented itself unexpectedly when the Atoll Commander granted permission to the ship's chaplain, John Kleckner, and myself, to go ashore and hold a service for the natives.

"On the following Sunday afternoon after a service for the crew and troops aboard ship, we were furnished with a landing craft. The ship's chaplain, organist and I landed on the island after a thorough drenching from the sea. We were cordially received. The natives were living in an abandoned Japanese barracks. The floor of the barn-like barracks was about four feet above the ground. On this the natives lived and slept, the men on one side, the women on the other. We placed the portable organ on the platform. Shy and yet inquisitive, the natives slowly gathered around. Children are alike the world over. Their curiosity for the organ quickly overcame their timidity. The suggestion that the natives sing a hymn was readily accepted. The elder led off, here and there groups joined in the singing until the entire assembly squatting on the floor swelled the chorus. The organist had considerable difficulty in following as they sang with a kind of rhythmic chant. There was a refreshing spontaneity to their singing, a childlike simplicity and directness. The hymn seemed to soar as though a great weight had been lifted from their shoulders. They had come out of a great tribulation. God was drying their tears. Their faith never faltered. Those who in the past had labored among them on the Lord's behalf might well thank God for the fruitage of their seed-planting.

"We bade the natives 'goodbye.' It was getting late but there was still time to visit the nearby Army cemetery. Quite by chance we witnessed the burial of a native. The service was conducted by an Army chaplain. The natives gathered reverently by the graveside. The closing hymn, 'Jesus, Saviour, pilot me, Over life's tempestuous sea,' sung by the natives drifted across the clearing by the water's edge and over the orderly rows of white crosses. The emerald water of the lagoon blended into the golden glow of the glory of the setting sun. Sea birds gleamed white against green foliage. A breeze that had come half way around the world rustled the palms over our heads. The brooding spirit of God settled as a hush upon the island as a kind of benediction and brought a peace that passes all understanding. We walked thoughtfully down the path to the craft that was to take us back to our ship."

When the recovery of the Marshall Islands was being prepared in Hawaii, an army sergeant chanced to spend a three-day leave in the home of American Board missionaries who had formerly lived at Jaluit in the Marshalls. He reported this fact to his chaplain. The latter secured copies of the Bible, hymn book and primer which had been printed in Marshallese by the American Bible Society and the American Board and, with the help of the missionaries, from these compiled a dictionary and brief set of working phrases which were placed in the hands of the men who made the first landings on Kwajelein. These were of great service, not only in facilitating friendly communication with the natives, but also in establishing contact with their ways and thought.

Because of his elementary acquaintance with their language thus secured, one of the chaplains was assigned the task of gathering the natives together and supervising their temporary transfer to a safer locality where they could be hospitalized and cared for. He reports that they had concealed themselves in caves, bomb craters and other refuges to escape bombardment. At first he faced difficulty in persuading them to come out of their places of hiding. Finally he located two men who had attended the mission school and who spoke English quite fluently. Serving as interpreters, they aided him. They

introduced him to the native pastor and thereafter the task was much easier, for the aged pastor was a man of influence, greatly respected and trusted.

The Japanese had confiscated all the Bibles and hymnals they could find, but about fifteen of these had escaped detection, and were now produced and shown with great reverence. One old woman emerged from her cave holding out her Bible and saying, "This is our book. We are Christians from Boston!"

One evening, after a long and tiring day, the chaplain was transporting a group of young people in a landing barge to a place of safety. He had gone apart from the rest and, leaning against the rail and watching the shore, unconsciously began to hum, 'Jesus, Lover of my soul.' All at once the young people began to sing the same tune in their own words. The rest of the trip was a songfest. The only embarrassment was that his guests knew more hymns than the chaplain.

"They are wonderful people," the chaplain declared, "intelligent, dignified and moral. It was a constant surprise to us to see how clean and neat they had kept themselves, especially the women and girls. The men, most of whom had been used in forced labor by the enemy, had very few clothes left, but they had poise. We had anticipated trouble, but the cooperation of the leaders made our work easy."

—Speaking to an officer of the American Board, he went on to say, "Your missionaries must have been wonderful people, too. They certainly gave these natives something to hold on to through their troubles." He reported overhearing a conversation between two soldiers: "Gee, I've certainly got a new angle on foreign missions. After having seen these people, I believe in missions."

Chaplain George P. LaBarre, Episcopalian from Greenfield, Mass., writes from another island, long an American Board station, at the heart of the Marshalls:

"The Navy authority on this atoll has appointed me Atoll Chaplain, mainly to make me responsible for religious work among the native inhabitants.

"The officials who have had much to do with the natives find them a gracious, friendly and devout people. They are well-trained Christians, and are naturally quite intelligent.

"The people will not work on Sundays. They refuse in spite of considerable Navy urging. Honesty is simply taken for granted. The work of the missionaries has been simply magnificent. If they had not laid so deep a foundation for American friendship, the people could cause the armed forces a great deal of trouble under present conditions. But nothing but respect and friendship greeted the Americans here, as far as the natives were concerned.

"Of course the natives continue to have church regularly. I am not able to get there on Sundays, but I understand that it is a big service. The native evangelists obviously continue to do a good job.

"I have gone out to the village about once a week, holding mid-week services when I go. The people come dressed up in their Sunday best. They bring their Bibles and hymn books if they have any and enter the large bare building which is the church. The men sit on the floor on one side; the women, on the floor on the other side. The service is mostly a song service, because the people are great singers and enjoy having a small organ to accompany them. Elders read the Bible responsively with the congregation and lead in prayers in the native tongue." Chaplain LaBarre spoke to the congregation through a native interpreter, Lazarus, a church elder highly respected in the village. Crippled so badly that he cannot walk, Lazarus has been teaching the children since the American Board missionaries were withdrawn. Services frequently go on for several hours, with the people begging for more.

On one visit to the island the Chaplain was asked to officiate at a quintuple wedding. He experienced considerable difficulty giving marriage instructions and questioning couples to determine if they fulfilled canonical requirements, but these were finally met and the five marriages were performed.

Following the brief ceremonies which were attended by natives and Navy and Marine Corps officers and men, the people showered the Chaplain with gifts of weaving and handwork.

"Since I could not refuse," Chaplain LaBarre wrote, "I accepted with many expressions of thanks. Then back in camp, after I had

distributed these gifts to souvenir-hungry Marines, they retaliated by giving a fund to the church. They got a big kick out of knowing they were contributing to a mission church out here in the middle of the Pacific."

Chaplain LaBarre concluded a report to the American Board with an appeal for materials to aid him in his unexpected new parish:

"It is a little thing, but I want our drafting department to make attractive marriage certificates for the couples who were married. Would you give me the correct Marshallese words to use on such a certificate?

"The people value their Bibles and hymn books very much and seem to take good care of them. However, more Marshallese hymn books and Bibles are needed. The name of the hymn book in Marshallese is *Buk in al Kob Tun Ko mon Ro dri ailin*. If you can send these things, label the box, 'Essential Religious Equipment' and mail it along, and if you can send me an English-Marshallese dictionary, I shall certainly try to put it to good use.

"Again I pay my respects to the excellent job you have done here, and to the fine people whom you served."

Chaplain LaBarre's request has borne fruit. Sergeant William C. Harris, a Marine Corps combat correspondent, recently wrote home:

"The natives of this section of the Marshall Islands now have new Bibles in their own language, thanks to Marines and Navy men who learned of their desire to obtain them.

"When we landed here in February we were surprised to see in many huts Bibles translated into Marshallese, also song books in the island tongue. The gracious natives gladly gave them to those who expressed a wish for them. Later it was learned that it is the custom to give almost anything a friend expresses a desire for.

"The Navy Chaplain assigned to this Marine outfit announced that he would attempt to secure new Bibles in Marshallese for the natives and would accept contributions in any amount for that purpose. One Marine corporal donated \$105. A total of more than \$250 was contributed and the Bibles were ordered from the American Bible Society. They have just arrived and are being distributed to the natives by the Chaplain."

iii

Time for May 1, 1944 reports that when the American flag was raised on the first atoll of *the Carolines* to be occupied by American troops, the old chief asked, "May we pray now?" Then the islanders broke into cheers, and struck up a Christian hymn in their soft-flowing native dialect.

iv

Many incidents are amusing, some embarrassing. An American officer on one island, trying to settle a dispute between workers of several tribes, called in their respective chiefs. When the chiefs assured him that there would be no more trouble, the officer revealed his scepticism. One of the chiefs looked at him reproachfully and said, "Remember, *we* are Christians."

On another occasion, an islander caught a soldier doing something which was none of his business. Pointing an accusing finger at the offender, he protested, "You are undoing the good work of your own missionaries."

Still more disconcerting was the rejoinder of a native, not a Christian, when asked to join a labor corps to aid the war effort: "Oh, no, only Christians fight!"

Humor and tragedy, pathos and heroism weave the tangled skein of existence for these simple folk of Micronesia as they come under observation by their American liberators. Yet all add up alike to essentially the same pattern.

A United Press correspondent, Mac R. Johnson, cables this tale from the Gilbert Islands:

"Seventeen chickens owned by a Navy chaplain peck a peaceful path around fox holes, tents and cocoanut palms, on this atoll islet because some Gilbertese natives remembered the denomination which brought them Christianity long before the Japanese came.

"Thirteen pastors and school teachers, all natives of a neighboring atoll, gave the chickens to Chaplain Francis T. Cooke, pastor-on-leave from the First Congregational Church at Bristol, Connecticut, bringing the flock 30 miles across open seas in outrigger canoes to this advanced base. . . .

"A mystery exists as to how the natives found out a Congregational minister was located here. Chaplain Cooke arrived with occupation forces during the Gilberts invasion in November 1943. On December 16 the natives came with their gift of chickens in gratitude for the establishment of a mission and high school.

"Chaplain Cooke said he has not been able to determine how the natives only three weeks after the bitter invasion battles were able to find a Congregational minister. Many chaplains of many denominations are stationed at advance bases in the Central Pacific; but the grapevine by unknown means of communication and espionage, including even tom-toms, located the Congregationalist.

"The gift of chickens had a sequel. In 1857, Dr. Hiram Bingham founded the first Christian mission on another island. In his honor and in tribute to the foreign mission group, the natives came 30 miles across open sea in an outrigger canoe to take Chaplain Cooke back for a visit. He returned after two days by the same means.

"A delegation of 200 natives met the Chaplain when he arrived. A red and white 'welcome' sign greeted him. High school students and wives of teachers danced for him. Fourteen village delegations came from various parts of the atoll with gifts and greetings.

"They brought, among other gifts, two white roosters, leading them like dogs on a leash with the straps fastened to their legs.

"Cooke said he preached or spoke 20 times in the two days, once on a native text which was interpreted by a pastor. His host was the Rev. P. Kaua, a native who is an ordained minister.

"During his stay he reviewed two troops of Boy Scouts, two of Girl Guides and a Cub Pack, and 'all were fully and correctly uniformed' in garb preserved from pre-war days."

Alongside this enagaging tale may well be placed another in quite different key told by Chaplain Yaeger:

"A blood-stained Christian hymnal, by the side of the road amid war's debris, on an island in a Central Pacific atoll. I handled it reverently. The shock of finding it there startled me.

"The smell of death was heavy in the air, for the island had been wrested from the enemy only a few days before. The devastation was ghastly. The metallic hail of bomb and shell had transformed

this beautiful coral island into an almost barren expanse of rock and sand. The once waving palms were now lifeless stubble—ghosts stalking in the dust-laden heat.

"I paused long enough to page through the hymnal. Among its contents were many familiar hymns, the words of which were in the Marshallese language. The book bore the imprint of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston, 1937.

"At the time, I could only speculate regarding the hymnal. A few days later I learned that some natives were present on the island during the recent attack. It was known some died during the battle. Before leaving I sought to learn more of the hymnal in my possession. A few natives pressed close to examine it. Lovingly a finger reached out as if to trace the crudely scrawled name of its owner on the blood-stained inner-cover of the book. Sadly the chief said, 'He died during the battle.'"

4

At the Rear Commands

OF THE many miracles of modern war, few are more incredible to the lay mind than the "services of supply"—that inconceivably intricate and delicate network of organization whereby not only are troops of every type with all needed equipment and ammunition transported halfway round the world and delivered at the precise split-second on the precise spot selected for their operation, but also every kind of replenishment and reinforcement is massed in great depots ready for instant deployment to keep the huge mechanism of combat moving without pause and without mishap. "Rear command" such a depot is called. It is here that expeditions are organized, trained and equipped, attacks are "mounted," replacements and reserves are mobilized, rest and recuperation are provided for forces returning from the front. Although they seldom break into the headlines, it is these bases which make possible all advance

operations. In the Pacific campaign, the principal "rear commands," aside from Australia and New Zealand, have been located at four points—at Hawaii, in New Caledonia, at Samoa and in the Fiji Islands.

Earlier we noted the coincidence that the movement of Christianity among the Pacific Islands in the nineteenth century followed a direction closely parallel to that of the Allied advance in the present campaign. Not, as might have been expected, from west to east, but from the east westward. It was to Samoa and its neighbors, to Fiji, and to the Sandwich Islands that missionaries first came. There are to be found today the oldest, most firmly established and most mature centers of the Church, the fruit respectively of three of the four great Protestant bodies which have been foremost in all the Pacific—British Congregationalists, British Methodists, and American Congregationalists. Indeed, we have observed Polynesians and Melanesians from Samoa and Tonga and Fiji and Hawaii playing a major role in bringing the new Faith to Papua, the Solomons and Micronesia.

Just as a principal key to military success is overlooked without recognition of the "rear commands," so a major secret of Christianity as it is discovered in the zones of combat is lost without notice of these areas from which their evangelization has been "mounted." Yes, not only a major secret of their present, but also some prevision of the future which may lie ahead for them.

II

THE SENATORIAL investigators, like many globe-trotters before them, found *Samoa* the "idyllic island of the Pacific." "The natives are a pleasure to see. They have excellent highways and schools, are better dressed, livelier acting, and immensely better housed than any we've yet seen. The native homes have coral floors with clean mats and neat screen-walls of bamboo. Everybody here, it seems, is attractive, graceful and gay—somewhere near the movie version of the South Seas at last! . . . The medical records show a complete absence of malaria and the island is rated as the 'healthiest place in the Pacific' this side of Hawaii. . . .

"An unforgettable house-party followed a reception at the General's home. There were native songs, music and dances. The honor-guests were the entertainers and all were notable for intelligence and beauty. One of the most refined and lovely ladies I have ever seen was the daughter of a chief of one of the islands. . . . One of the most charming of these graceful women . . . told me her grandfather came from Ireland and her mother was half Samoan and half English. These beautiful, gifted, graceful islanders are the idyllic story of *Mutiny on the Bounty* all over again, but in a later, modern, and happier installment.¹

With not wholly unwarranted patriotic pride, the Senators point to the fact that Tutuila in the Samoans has been, since 1899, a possession and naval base of the United States—the only American territory in this part of the Pacific. American administration has brought roads and sanitation, including the virtual elimination of malaria and great reduction in elephantiasis and venereal disease. But, on even a one-day stop, the earlier and deeper sources of the charm, intelligence and culture of the Samoans did not escape the Senators. Education is still almost wholly, as it has been since its inception, the care of the Church. The native population of some 50,000 is entirely Christian, roughly three-fifths Congregationalists, one-sixth Roman Catholics and the rest Methodists and adherents of smaller sects.

ii

From every point of view, Samoa is a pivotal point within the Pacific of unique and fascinating importance.

Ethnologically, its inhabitants are of special interest. It is believed that here the original Polynesian settlers, that gifted and stalwart people whose origins are shrouded in mystery, may have halted on their eastward migration from Malaysia, and hence spread through the surrounding archipelagoes. The earliest explorers found them alert, attractive and remarkably advanced in many arts and crafts with a highly articulated system of tribal customs. "They had not sunk into cannibalism and savagery like their western neighbors,

¹ James M. Mead, *Tell the Folks Back Home*, pp. 217, 217. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York.

and the instincts of the gentleman were always more or less in evidence. They were generous to the point of prodigality. If a visitor would not be placed in an awkward position, he must not greatly admire anything." They were and are noted orators. "The language of Samoa is the softest, the most polite, the finest, and the most complete of all the Polynesian dialects." "The Samoans are the real aristocracy of the Pacific."

The natural beauty and enchantment of Samoa have become legendary to all the world through the praise of Robert Louis Stevenson. "There is charm in the land and people, music in the reef and forest, and poetry in the moving skies and restless waters. . . . Forests clothe the mountain sides from peak to base, and run through the full gamut of greens. . . . The soil is fertile and the rainfall abundant."¹ "The climate is moist but not excessively hot." No traveller who has called at the American naval base at Pago Pago will ever forget his first impressions as the sleek white liner slipped through the narrow slash in the sea wall and came to anchor in the silent blue waters of a huge bowl, seemingly cupped out of giant peaks rising two thousand feet from the water's edge. An extinct volcano crater several miles across has here settled in the ocean with a narrow slit on its seaward side deep enough for the passage of the largest ship, as though to create a harbor of perfect proportions and security—one of the most dramatic and beautiful anchorages in the world.

Politically, the strategic significance of Samoa has long been recognized. As early as 1877, the United States had established a naval coaling station at Pago Pago. In 1889, Great Britain, Germany and the United States fell into serious dispute over the islands, resulting first in a three-nation joint protectorate, and then in their partition between Germany and the United States with Britain compensated by exclusive jurisdiction elsewhere. The German islands came under New Zealand mandate after the First World War.

From the point of view of the Christian Movement, if one were compelled to select a single area of the Pacific for intensive study, choice might well fall on Samoa. It was not here that Christianity first came; Tahiti and Tonga were earlier evangelized. It was not

¹ J. W. Burton, *The Call of the Pacific*, pp. 48-9.

here that the most obdurate and perilous obstacles were encountered; as we shall note, Fiji as well as the barbarous tribes to the west provided more thrilling adventures and more hazardous successes. But in a number of vital respects—initiative of the native peoples, rapid and complete evangelization, the building of a fully independent and self-maintaining indigenous church, missionary zeal and unbounded generosity, maturity of outlook and spirit, world-mindedness—the Samoan Christians stand foremost. "Perhaps there is no mission in the world where the advance has been so rapid and yet so solid," declares one authority. And he adds his tribute to the labors of a denomination other than his own: "The London Missionary Society has in Samoa undoubtedly the finest and best-conceived enterprise in the Pacific."²

iii

For the initiation of Christianity in Samoa, we must look in the first instance, not to Europe or America, but to fellow-Polynesians of neighboring islands—Tahiti to the east and Tonga to the south. Here we meet the first beginnings of Christian faith in the South Seas. A start was attempted in the very last years of the eighteenth century. As so prevailingly, the early story was scarred by opposition, death and wellnigh insupportable discouragement. Eleven of the original eighteen missionaries to Tahiti sought refuge in Australia after a year's effort, two "went native." In the same year, three of the little group on Tonga were brutally murdered; the rest seized the opportunity of a passing vessel to return to Australia. Nevertheless, within a quarter of a century, the entire population of Tahiti had become Christian in adherence; that of Tonga ten years later.

The introduction of Christianity into Samoa was in this fashion. Tongans married into Samoan families and brought with them a Christian life so impressive and contagious that the new faith took root and grew. In 1828, a native Samoan, Saivaaia, visited Tonga, became a Christian, returned home and immediately started churches among his own people; thus the influence spread not only from village to village but from island to island. In 1830, the renowned

² J. W. Burton, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 55.

pioneer of the London Missionary Society, John Williams, who had been at the heart of the remarkable achievements on Tahiti, stopped at Samoa and left there eight Tahitian teachers. It was another five years before the first European missionary took up residence. He found a Christian community of over 2000 scattered among sixty-five villages, holding regular services either in churches or in their own houses and using the very scanty Christian literature imported from Tonga. "Within six years a great spiritual work, self-originated, self-propagated, and self-sustained, had spread from place to place, despite fierce local jealousies. Congregations had been formed, churches built, and societies instituted without a farthing of assistance from outside: a result unparalleled in the history of modern missions." Thus Samoa offers striking illustration of Christianity introduced, seeded, and nurtured to healthy flowering through the initiative of native leadership.

In the very first years, an incident occurred of some pathos and not a little suggestiveness as to the vigorous independence of the Samoans' faith, the eagerness of the early missionaries to avoid sectarian competition, and the difficulties of imposing from without controls, however wise, upon a thriving Christianity. It embodies important and unexpected insight on the much discussed question of the relation of missions to indigenous churches.

Tonga had been evangelized by Methodists. The Tongans and Samoans who brought Christianity thence were loyal Methodists. So were the churches they founded. The first European missionary was of the same persuasion. But Tahiti had been evangelized by Congregationalists. This was the affiliation of the teachers brought by John Williams. In the very year in which the London Missionary Society (Congregationalist) was planning to supplement the Tahitian teachers with three Europeans, the two parent mission organizations in London reached a farsighted agreement that Tonga and Fiji were to be the field of the Methodists, Tahiti and Samoa of the Congregationalists, and that Methodism should withdraw from the latter.

However, the Samoan Methodists had formed a deep affection for Methodism and their missionary. They entered their eloquent protest: "Are not we Tongans and Samoans one people? Shall we

be separated by our friends in England? No, no, never shall it be thus! What do we know of Tahiti? We only heard of Tahiti last night. It is not right that the good people should take away our missionary whom we cleave to, and make us unite with those whom we do not want, and whom we do not love. Are there not many different sects in England? Then why should the people of England wish us to have only one here?"

The subsequent history reveals not a little bitterness and some tragedy for the vitality of the first Samoan churches. The upshot was: the missionary societies tried to remain faithful to their agreement so that Christianity in Samoa became predominantly Congregational; but Samoan determination also had its way, so that both churches have flourishing communities in the islands today.

iv

The subsequent development must be compressed into a few sentences. Within twenty months of the arrival of the first European missionary, the 2000 Christians had multiplied to 13,000. Virtually the entire population followed in a comparatively few years. In two decades, the entire Bible had been translated and published in the Samoan tongue. Ardent Samoan Christians went forth year by year, to Fiji and the New Hebrides and the Solomons and New Guinea, there to take up a precarious residence in advance of western missionaries and to bring light and education, healing and compassion to other men and women of allied races, as neighbors had first brought these gifts to their fathers. It is doubtful if there is another people on the face of the earth who, in proportion to their numbers, have given so many missionaries to the Church, or have paid so great a price in sacrifice and martyrdom. At home, not only do they build and maintain all their own churches, schools and other institutions, but they sustain their missionary guests as well. And they regularly support the world-wide work of their Churches. Yes, their philanthropy extends beyond the Church. To Armenian Relief and the Red Cross and Dr. Barnardo's Homes and Schools for the Blind in England, they have sent generous contributions. The objective student can speak of them as "a Christian community which is probably unequalled in the Pacific."

How they appraise what Christianity has brought to their islands is hinted in these lines from a Samoan Boat-song:

*Clear were the streams and sweet the rills of Aana;
But the warriors came from Manono,
And they dyed the clear flood with the heart's best blood
Of the slain of the manhood of Aana,
But Williams came with the Gospel of Peace,
And clear streams and sweet waters now flow on Aana.*

III

FROM THE *Fiji Islands*, another of the "rear commands" where American forces have been trained for attack or returned from combat for recuperation, Corporal Clayton Funk of Bath, Pa., writes his parents: "Dear Mom and Pop. . . . One night six of us stayed in a chief's hut, or *bure*, as they call them. We all sat on the grass mats on the floor." The American lads were invited to join in a hymn-sing, and were handed hymnals with both Fijian and English words on each page. Corporal Funk continues, "I thought the songs would be strange to me, but it was just like singing out of our church hymnal at home. . . . Some of the tunes they knew better than I did. . . .

"What I'm getting at is this: It is all due to the missionaries that our churches have had on these islands for years. The missionaries have proven their worth many, many times since we came overseas. I want you to take ten dollars from my account and hand it in for foreign missions."

It is altogether improbable that Corporal Funk and his comrades had any conception of the state of affairs a hundred or even fifty years ago in these peaceful and languorous Islands of the Blessed, or of the reception which might have awaited them if they had dropped in on the grandparent of their present host.

ii

A little more than a hundred years ago, the first Christians ventured upon outer islands of the Fiji Archipelago. These were the people who awaited them:

"The Fijians had no equals for brutality, licentiousness, and utter disregard of human life. The world over their name was a synonym for all that is atrocious, inhuman, and demoniacal. . . .

"The Fijian's outstanding vice was his revolting cannibalism. Human flesh was eaten by preference, as well as from hatred of enemies slain in battle. The cannibal ovens were never cold. In one district the entire population was kept to be devoured by their more powerful neighbors. A chief would send to a neighbor or ally a roasted victim carefully wrapped, and escorted by a procession. After a certain war, victory was celebrated by cooking 100 human bodies for a feast. Here is one picture from those days: "The men doomed to death were ordered to dig a hole in the earth for the purpose of making a native oven, and were even required to cut firewood to roast their own bodies. They were directed to go and wash, and afterward to make a cup of banana leaf, which, from opening a vein in each person, was filled with blood. Their blood was drunk in the presence of the sufferers. The king then had their arms and legs cut off, cooked, and eaten, some of which was presented to them. He then ordered a fish-hook to be put in their tongues, which were drawn out as far as possible, and then cut off; these were roasted and eaten to the taunt, "We are eating your tongues." As life was not extinct, an incision was made in the side, and the bowels taken out which soon terminated their sufferings in this world.¹

"When a war-canoe was launched, living men were used as human rollers, and their bruised and torn bodies were afterwards roasted and eaten. . . . The decks of these canoes were washed with human blood before they sailed on an important expedition—to make propitious the voyage.

"New houses had their great posts held up by men who stood in the deep holes in the ground, and then the earth was shovelled in upon them.

"The Fijians regarded the victims of shipwreck as condemned by the gods and doomed to die; and if any such reached their inhospitable shores, they were dispatched with the promptitude and zeal of the performance of a sacred duty.

¹ Joseph Waterhouse, *The King and People of Fiji*, pp. 84, 85. The Epworth Press. Used by permission.

"Infanticide was so common as to be 'reduced to a system.' Two-thirds of the children perished at the hands of their parents. The sick and deformed could not be tolerated.

"Strangling was common. The chief about to die must not be allowed to go on his unknown and dangerous journey unattended; so his faithful wives submitted to the noose of the strangling-cord. When one king's son was drowned at sea, his sixteen wives were strangled according to custom. At the same time a cannibal feast was held upon the bodies of eleven men slain in war. Two of the early missionaries had been offered a hut within the king's compound, only a few yards away from the cannibal ovens. When their shutters were closed to hide the shocking spectacle, such offense was taken that one of the missionaries came near being murdered. The race seemed to have exhausted its ingenuity in devising new forms of cruelty and of torture."²

iii

That was in 1835.

As in Samoa, Christianity first came to Fiji from neighboring islands through natives of kindred race and under the auspices of the same two churches, Congregational and Methodist.

Two Tahitian teachers had been located on an outer island by the London Missionary Society, but they were not reinforced and later joined the more energetic Methodists. It is to the latter that the honor goes for the transformation of Fiji. Again, Christians from the nearby Tonga Islands had already prepared the way. In October 1835, a schooner with the inauspicious name *Blackbird* put ashore on a lesser island of the group two English Methodists, their wives and children. The work began.

Thirty years later, the last instance of cannibalism occurred. It was another ten years before any Western Power touched its hand to these islands, bringing Western instruments of order and government. Here, then, is a people a hundred years from cruel barbarism and seventy-five years from cannibalism.

Just over a century. And today?

² John W. Burton, *The Call of the Pacific*, pp. 86-7; William E. Bennett in *A Century in the Pacific*, pp. 444-45; D. L. Leonard in *The Pacific Islanders*, pp. 144-9.

Of the native population of 97,000 people, 84 per cent are literate, over 99 per cent are Christian; and Fiji is one of the most orderly and progressive communities in the South Pacific! At no time during the century has the staff of English (later Australian) Methodists charged with the task of civilizing, educating, and Christianizing the population numbered much more than a score. From the outset, much responsibility of leadership has fallen upon the Melanesians themselves.

iv

A few years ago, a great Pacific pleasure liner on which I was en route from Los Angeles to New Zealand put in to Fiji for a one-day stop. We had not pulled alongside the pier at Suva, the capital port, before the stalwart physiques, the dark skins, and the black kinky headcoverings which lined the quay reminded us that we had come amongst a race of powerful Melanesians. But an hour ashore convinced us that we were also among a peaceable, industrious, progressive people with high promise of intellectual and cultural advance.

We visited a number of the main centers of work: The simple, graceful buildings of a girls' school hidden amidst tropical trees on high ground with a panoramic view across coral reefs, curling breakers, and deep blue waters far out to sea. A sturdy boys' school where at the noon recess Indian lads spun marbles improvised from cowrie shells and Fijian boys played soccer in the tropical heat. A beautiful little church recently erected for the Indian Christian congregation. And then, a dozen miles from Suva through thick jungle, the principal educational center of the mission—a splendid community of buildings including a normal school to train native teachers, a theological college to prepare Fijian pastors, a boys' technical training school, an agricultural institute, primary schools for both sexes, and, not far away, one of the several orphanages sponsored by the mission. In one of the churches, an old "killing stone" from the former heathen temple against which victims were dashed to death now serves as the baptismal font.

Our tour brought us finally to the mission office—a modest two-room bungalow which serves as bookstore, print shop, and adminis-

trative headquarters for an enterprise embracing close to a thousand churches and over three hundred schools. In a crowded rear room we exchanged greetings and talked with the present-day successors of the early pioneers, as unpretentious as their surroundings and equipment. The worth of their accomplishment is recorded in no impressive monuments of steel or stone but in every aspect of the life of one of the most lovely garden-spots in the South Seas. Is there on the face of the earth a more impressive record of solid achievement in behalf of a primitive people? Or more convincing proof of what Christian missions, unaided and untrammelled by Western government or business, may accomplish with and for a whole population?

v

Unhappily there is a postscript. In at least three particulars, this amazing result of a hundred years of intelligent devotion now faces new and baffling difficulties.

With the growth of population, the reduction of illiteracy, and the consolidation of British administration in the Fiji Islands, responsibility for primary education is, quite naturally, being increasingly assumed by the colonial government. But official education, however efficient, is unlikely to maintain the same high synthesis of training of the mind and nurture of the spirit, the equipment of pupils for achievement and the preparation of children for life, which is the very genius of Christian education at its best and a principal secret of the remarkable advance of the Fijian peoples. Will secular Western standards of morals and business find entrance through secularized education?

More serious, the introduction by Europeans of large-scale economic enterprise during the present century has brought complications and problems of serious threat to the inhabitants of Fiji. Unable to persuade the native Melanesians to undertake the menial drudgery so essential for economic exploitation, the leaders of Western business have imported hordes of low-caste workers from British India as common laborers. The meaning which their immigration holds for the culture and progress of the Fijians may be suggested in the following statistics. The Indians now almost equal the native

population in numbers. But literacy among the Indians is 24 per cent as compared with 84 per cent among the Fijians. Of the children of school age, three-fifths of the Fijians attend, but only one-fifth of the Indians. Of the Fijian girls, over half are in school; but of the Indian girls, fewer than one in ten because of the traditional Hindu and Moslem attitudes toward women. Of the 85,000 imported Indian laborers, 70 per cent are Hindus, 12 per cent are Moslems, and only 2 per cent are Christians. *And this immigrant population is increasing three times as fast as that of the native inhabitants.* Thus far relations between the two peoples are satisfactory. But it is only too possible that a situation is being created which will have tragic consequences in later generations.

More serious still are the indirect results of the impact of Western civilization. We inquired whether drunkenness, crime, immorality were serious difficulties in work among the Fijians. "Only very recently," replied our host sadly, "with the coming of cocktail parties, gambling, prostitution, and the movies"—invariable accompaniments of the advent of Western business. Illegitimacy is mounting rapidly. Lawlessness is beginning to constitute a major problem. Thus, the struggle for the moral and spiritual future of the people of Fiji has just begun. Fiji sheds new light upon the much-mooted question of the relations between "Western civilization" and Christian missions in their respective impacts upon a primitive people.

IV

OF THE several bases where the campaign for the recovery of the Pacific has been mounted, none is so little known to Americans as *New Caledonia*. Samoa, Fiji, Hawaii—these place-names stir at least a dim awareness of location, character and history. But, New Caledonia—"Where and what is that?" By the same token, Anglo-Saxon Christians are less informed concerning New Caledonia than perhaps any other major island in the South Seas.

The reason in each case is the same. New Caledonia, with the adjacent Loyalty Islands, constitutes one of the two areas of French control in the Pacific. Despite great natural wealth and increasing military and strategic significance, the French Government until

recently has given comparatively little attention to these possessions except to locate a penal colony there.

Notwithstanding France's proud profession of religious tolerance in the homeland, that policy has not always extended to her colonies. Ardent and often bigoted Roman Catholic administrators in New Caledonia have lent official support to the exclusive claims of their Church. Although Christianity first reached these islands through Protestant labors, hampering restrictions upon the sizable Protestant communities have not infrequently taken on the character of persecution. Moreover, the meager resources of the Paris Evangelical Society (Protestant) were hardly adequate to the needs. Before the War only a dozen of their missionaries working from four head-stations were available.

Paradoxically, the large American forces located on New Caledonia, and the special circumstances of their protracted and sometimes comparatively leisured residence there, have made possible a more thorough acquaintance with the Christian life of the inhabitants than elsewhere. It is here that appreciation of unforeseen discoveries has taken most interesting and noteworthy concrete expression.

ii

Next to New Guinea, New Caledonia is the largest island in the South Seas. "The varied and beautiful scenery is little known to travellers, though the climate is exceptionally good and the island remarkably free from disease. . . . Europeans live there in excellent health. The high mountains provide capital sanatoria whither the pale-faced inhabitants may flee" during the enervating winter months.¹ Agriculture does not flourish, but an abundance of coconuts, coffee, cotton, maize and tobacco furnish profitable exports. More valuable, however, are the mineral deposits of chrome, iron, manganese and especially nickel which is of exceptional purity. "The richest land per acre in the entire world," Senator Mead calls it.

As with areas we have earlier mentioned, notably Micronesia, it

¹ J. W. Burton, *Missionary Survey of the Pacific Islands*, p. 48, and *The Call of the Pacific*, p. 162.

is accidents of geography and topography which have lifted New Caledonia into special war-time importance. In the months of desperate defensive efforts, its location offered the closest secure base south of the Solomons. For hundreds of miles along its coastline, nature has raised coral reefs from one to twenty miles offshore which provide great basins of sheltered and navigable water. A triangular indentation near the southwest tip protected by a long island across its mouth creates an exceptionally fine harbor; here is located the principal town and capital, Noumea. Thus situation and climate supply conditions especially favorable for naval anchorages, air fields, training operations and the location of base hospitals and convalescent centers.

The population is one of the most motley in the Pacific. The original inhabitants were Melanesians but mixed with strains of Polynesians from the east and Papuans from the west. "The standard of morality was low, women were formerly little more than drudges, and infanticide was common. . . . Cannibalism, while apparently never as rampant as it was in Fiji, was not unknown."² These native peoples constitute less than half the present populace. The remnants of the French penal colony and the more numerous descendants of freed convicts outnumber them. And imported laborers from Japan, Java, and many other Pacific islands plus free Europeans add "an element from beneath the Tower of Babel."

The advent of Christianity followed a pattern already familiar. In 1834, a Tongan Christian came to one of the Loyalty Islands. Seven years later, a representative of the London Missionary Society, rowing along the coast, was hailed by this native in a canoe with the friendly greeting, "I know the true God." Two Samoan teachers were sent to join him, and shortly after a native from Rarotonga settled upon another island of the group. With French annexation in 1853 came Roman Catholic missionaries, discrimination against Protestants and finally the expulsion of the leading English missionary. "Yet Protestant Christianity persisted. In the 1890s there were said to be about 8000 Protestants and 3000 Roman Catholics."³ Meantime, French Protestants assumed responsibility for the work

² Hawthorne Daniel, *Islands of the Pacific*, p. 129.

³ K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. V, p. 233.

initiated by native Christians and Englishmen. By 1930, Roman Catholics made up about half the population of New Caledonia and its dependencies; the Protestant constituency was very much smaller and more scattered.

iii

Chaplain G. E. Hopkins of Winchester, Virginia, prefaces an account of observations while on a Pacific assignment with a confession that previously, although he was a Christian minister, his enthusiasm for foreign missions had been somewhat half-hearted. He goes on: "I have changed my mind. I have seen several islands of the South Pacific. I have seen a number of missionaries and missions. I have seen tribes which have become Christian and tribes which have not accepted Christianity. I am sold on foreign missions." Security regulations forbade precise identification of the places he visited. But references make it clear that they were islands of the New Caledonia and Loyalty group.

"I'll cite a few examples of what I've seen. There's Hnacen. He was born on a small island in the Southwest Pacific. His grandfather was a convert to Christianity and his father became a minister. I met his father, now president of the native ministers' association of his island, and heard him conduct a beautiful reverent religious service. He is a fine man, but his chagrin was great when he discovered that his small son was both deaf and dumb. In his own grandfather's time the solution to his embarrassment would have been simple. The child would have been killed. But he was a Christian and he couldn't take life even if he was ashamed of the child. That in itself marked a great victory for missions.

"The greater victory was Hnacen himself. Under the tutelage of the missionaries he has learned to lip-read not only his native language but French also. He can read and write English. He has so ready a conception of the world that when I wrote on his paper that I was from Virginia in the United States, he ran over to the small map on the wall, on which states were not shown, and pointed out the exact location of Virginia. He takes shorthand and types. He is now secretary to the missionary head of a seminary on another island."

The historical background of the incident is sketched in:

"Nearly a hundred years ago, two or three Polynesian families arrived in their outrigger canoes to settle on this island. On their own island, hundreds of miles away, they had met missionaries and had become Christian. When they were settled, they began to hold services. Melanesian natives came out of curiosity and stayed to find a New Way of Life. Soon practically the whole of that little island was Christian.

"Few natives remain pagan in any of the islands, and there are many that are neighbors to the little island where the Polynesian immigrants were not ashamed to proclaim their faith."

Behind the present maturity and strength of the native church lies also the careful mission organization, and the white missionaries. Chaplain Hopkins continues:

"I have mentioned the seminary. It is located on one of the South Seas' most beautiful and pleasant islands. Nearly two hundred of its alumni are serving as ministers in the villages of the several islands. It is a beautiful spot itself. A compound of native huts around a green campus, overlooked by the home of the missionary and a school for girls, it might well put to shame the campus of many an American college. Nearby are sand beaches where Pacific surf makes as good bathing as any American summer resort has to offer. Coconut and banana trees add to the beauty of the surroundings.

"A remarkable thing about the seminary is the fact that most of its students are married. The missionaries encourage the students to marry and bring their wives with them. The wives are given courses in how to be good 'preachers' wives.' There are even students with several children. Indeed, the compound has all the appearance of a village. Over all there rest a beauty and tranquillity that mark it as one of the places in the South Seas, and there aren't too many, to which I intend some day to return.

"Among Protestants in these islands, ministers are formed into an association with a Chief Pastor or President. Ministers are assigned villages for an indeterminate stay. Changes are infrequent, but do occur. It is impossible to describe what the minister means to the people of the village. Usually he is the best educated person in the

community, including the chief. You can spot his house because of its better care and landscaping. His wife is better groomed. But they are a real part of the village and from them the others learn and emulate. He is, also, or was until the American soldiers created a souvenir business, the best paid citizen excepting the chief, for he receives the magnificent sum of eight dollars a year.

"It is not the school or the system, however, that has impressed me most. It is what they have achieved. Without much help from the government, missionaries and native ministers have changed a war-like people—some were cannibalistic—to a peaceful people. There is nowhere in any of the islands that one need fear to walk at any hour of the day or night. And native hospitality is unexcelled."

Himself a Protestant, Chaplain Hopkins gladly pays tribute to the labors of Roman Catholics:

"I can truthfully say that the greatest single piece of missionary work which I have seen was Catholic. It was a leper colony. Regardless of how much you have read or heard, you cannot know how really awful and repulsive leprosy is until you have seen it. I went to the colony in company with a Catholic chaplain and the two of us were shown every place and every patient.

"It is literally true that the leper rots away. There were those in the early stages with only fingers or toes gone. Then there were those with whole hands and feet missing, eye sockets gone, ears gone, noses gone. I cannot even now think of what I saw there without a shudder. Yet on that small island nearly two hundred men, women, and children were confined to the colony. There are houses in which whole families of lepers live. Occasionally a baby is born to a leper mother. The baby is taken away at once and has every chance of growing up a healthy, normal child.

"Perhaps the most pitiful case of all was one of the sisters who has devoted her life to tending these unfortunate people. During the past year she has discovered that she, too, has leprosy. In a careless moment, or through too close association over a long period, she contracted the disease. Her Christian spirit, and the devotion of all the sisters and priests at the colony, gave me a new feeling about missions and missionaries. How little some of us dare and do! But

here they give their lives, actually and cheerfully. In such a place one could not but be inspired by the selfless sacrifice which some, far away from home and native land, are making in His name."

Chaplain Hopkins concludes:

"I am not only sold on missions, I am sold on missionaries. I have known three rather intimately and have met several others. Even more significant, I have talked with many old-time residents of the Islands and with American authorities who have had many contacts with the missions. They are unanimous in their praise. Take the three I know. One is a graduate of a famous continental university. He has a wife, also well educated, and two children who share the rigors of his life with him, and it is a rigorous life. For incessant work, for his wife's work, for the risk they are taking of seriously impaired health, he receives less money than a buck private in the American Army. There is also jolly, fat Miss J. who hasn't been home since she left seventeen years ago. Her spirit is contagious, and she has done a great work. Once in a crisis she ran the whole mission for nearly a year, alone. And, there is my friend Pastor A. His capable wife and three children have shared his missionary endeavors and sacrifices. It is a constant marvel to me that such sacrifices are made so cheerfully. Indeed in the homes of these brave people one has no consciousness of sacrifice. It is only in the occasional wistful word, the lingering over a memory, the fear that the local schools are giving inadequate instruction to their children, that one detects the sacrifice.

"This I know: I shall never again apologize for missions. I have seen them—and they are doing a great work."

Another Chaplain speaks of the impression made upon his men:

"Out here we find the Christian religion the closest tie we have with our strange neighbours. People of various races find that they are one with us in the same loyalty to Christ and the great human ideals of justice and liberty which rest on Christian truth. It will not hurt us to know that mission work has paved a way for us here in New Caledonia, having created a spirit of sympathy and understanding. None of my sturdy men will ever say, 'I don't believe in missions.' They are all for them."

iv

Tangible evidence of the admiration of American troops for the work they have observed in New Caledonia has recently become known.

With the fall of France in 1940, all support from French Protestantism to the missions in the Pacific was suddenly cut off. They became, in a phrase now familiar, "Orphaned Missions." Immediately help was forthcoming from those parts of the Christian world which were still free and able to give. Contributions from twenty-five nations and every principal Protestant communion flowed in to central treasuries in New York and London and thence were distributed to some 120 Missions, similarly "orphaned," in every part of the world.¹ The leaders of the Paris Evangelical Society in the South Pacific were among those thus saved from attrition. For two and a half years, the Orphaned Missions Fund made it possible for them to continue at their work.

In most Pacific areas, Pearl Harbor brought additional suffering and peril to Christian missionaries. But not to those of New Caledonia. After 1942, appeals for help ceased. The explanation was twofold. By now the native Christians had rallied to sustain not only their own work but their friends and guests, the missionaries. The other explanation was that men of the Allied forces had discovered their plight and had begun to contribute regularly for their assistance. Still later, through the Service Men's Christian League, contributions began to reach New York from New Caledonia, to be sent to other mission fields throughout the world which likewise were hard pressed as a result of war conditions.

In July 1944, an "Island Preaching Mission" was conducted among the American forces on New Caledonia. A large twelve-page pamphlet, beautifully illustrated with drawings and photographs of the land of their present residence and of their life there, was with great difficulty prepared. After describing the development of their own religious services, first in simple huts of native style and then

¹ For a brief account of "Orphaned Missions," see the author's *What IS the Church Doing?*, pp. 58-64.

in more adequate and beautiful chapels, they define the purposes of the Preaching Mission and conclude on this note:

"From the time when Jesus said unto his disciples, 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations,' His true followers have felt a keen responsibility for world conditions.

"The welfare of every man on earth is a Christian's concern.

"In this respect, Christian soldiers on this island are no different from people of God any place on earth. Like their forefathers, they built houses of worship, but they did not stop there. They felt, as the great men before them felt, that the world was their parish.

"In the early days of this story a prayer meeting was called to consider ways of having a part in world missions. Thus was born a movement which has reached large proportions.

"Since that prayer meeting, mission money has been going out from this island unto all the world. There is scarcely a field of missions which has not profited from the \$19,000 soldiers here have contributed.

"The people of this island have an educational building nearing completion second to none any place. Seventy-five percent of its cost was paid for by Christian men in America's army.

"Offerings of one particular place of worship are large enough to finance all mission work on this, our island [New Caledonia], and in addition keep the work going on three adjacent islands [of the Loyalty group].

"We who live with soldiers find they not only have 'fox-hole religion' but a faith that makes them say, 'Thy Kingdom come, O God'—and then set to work to make it a reality in this present day."

The most recent project of the American forces in New Caledonia is outlined in a letter from Sergeant Robert F. Pitcock, who writes as "Treasurer of the Service Men's Christian League":

"We have been watching for some time the splendid work done at the Protestant Mission at Houailou, and have also noted the extreme need for a building suitable for worship at the mission. All the people have is a school building. The Protestant Temple at Noumea is a beautiful structure, as fine as any congregation could want, and has, nearing completion, an educational building that

would be a credit to any church its size in the States. It has been largely financed by the gifts of servicemen who worship in the Protestant Temple. Houailou is halfway up the island on the opposite side. It is our belief that a new mission church, as beautiful as could be built with available materials, would give a real lift to the Houailou mission and to mission work all over the island, at the same time giving servicemen the feeling that they are leaving a tangible contribution to mission work here on the islands."

The Sergeant then explains that he is writing to the headquarters of the Orphaned Missions Fund because if this project were to be undertaken contributions to that Fund would have to be temporarily discontinued. "We do not want to start erecting stone church buildings in one part of the world if it is going to cut off some missionary's bread and butter in another. . . . We feel that from the world-wide point of view you have a better vantage point than we, since the first glimpse most of us have ever had of any sort of mission work has been here on this island and we are likely to let our enthusiasm run away with our sense of proportion.

"I might add that, should we build the church building, it would be designed by a noted church architect, it would be financed by American servicemen, would be built by native workmen, and it would form a sort of monument to the servicemen who have spent from one month to almost three years here. If such a building is not built while the Americans are here, I do not know how or when it would be built, as building materials are usually almost unobtainable. At the present time, materials are available and labor is cheap."

In the last days of 1944, another letter from Sergeant Pitcock reports that the fund of \$4000 for the memorial church at Houailou has been raised. A local French architect has been retained and work on the excavation of the foundations commenced. At the same time, the service men are renewing their gifts to the Orphaned Missions Fund. An initial remittance was enclosed, including a small balance from the Houailou Church Building Fund.

As one advisor comments: "Thus the American occupation of New Caledonia may leave behind some memorable results, not always associated with military occupations."

What more suitable than that the lovely chapel at Guadalcanal,

erected by Christians of the Solomon Islands in memory of American servicemen who brought them liberation, should have its parallel in a church at Houailou erected by American servicemen as tribute to Christians of New Caledonia who first opened their eyes to the World Mission of Christ?

V

HAWAII, as a permanent United States base, falls outside the scope of our study. Nevertheless, its history records one of the most romantic and glorious chapters of American service to a less advanced people, even though it be a chapter virtually unknown to most Americans.

Samuel Mills, a Williams undergraduate who had participated in the famous haystack meeting from which the American foreign missionary advance of the nineteenth century is to be dated, came down to Yale for graduate study and there met Henry Obookiah, a lad from the Sandwich Islands, as they were then called. Young Obookiah had fled from home after his father and mother had been killed before his eyes, and his infant brother speared to death as he was carrying him on his back. Brought to New Haven by a kindly sea captain, he was discovered one day on the steps of Yale College "crying for sheer loneliness and for the education which he saw others were getting." Through Obookiah, Mills was stirred to the call of Hawaii.

In October 1819, a party of twenty-one sailed from Boston under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions on the five-month voyage around Cape Horn. The party included two ministers (one of them, the first Hiram Bingham), two teachers, a physician, a printer, a farmer, the wives and children of these men, and three natives of the Sandwich Islands. To telescope the story into a single sentence: Forty-three years later, in 1863, "the islands had been Christianized, the language reduced to writing, with books in it on science, literature, and religion, the Bible put in the mother tongue, the law of Christian marriage everywhere recognized, public worship attended as well as in the majority of Christian countries, Sunday better observed than in most parts of the world, and intemperance, except among foreigners, rarer than in any other portion of

the earth's surface."¹ In that year, all work was turned over to the direction of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association. More significant still, ten years earlier the Association had joined with the American Board in sending the first missionary group to Micronesia with several Hawaiians in the company.

Fortunately, it is not necessary for us to trace the history of Hawaii through the subsequent decades—the advent of commercial exploitation; the importation of hordes of Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos and Portuguese to serve its interests; the steady numerical decline of the Polynesian population; the prostitution of the islands' beauty and charm to sugar, pineapples, tourists and idle rich; and the final incident—the influx, both prior to Pearl Harbor and since, of tens of thousands of men in uniform with maximum economic and moral demoralization, and the bending of every aspect of Hawaii's life to imperious military exigency. The happiest postscript to the Christianization of the Sandwich Islands is being written in this War, not in Hawaii itself, but thousands of miles to the west where, a half century ago, men and women from Hawaii and the United States joined hands to bring their faith to the "insignificant dots" of Micronesia.

5

Elsewhere

THUS FAR our account has been confined to the islands of the Southwest and Central Pacific. It is there that large forces of the United Nations, especially Americans, have come in contact with vast areas of the "non-Christian" world.

But our impressions would be sadly incomplete without at least some attention to other regions scattered on almost every continent where the Allied military have penetrated. Thrilling adventures of battle and rescue are not always present. But stories of the peoples

¹ K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. V, p. 251.

discovered, their life and spirit, speak with almost monotonous similarity. The fact is that *wherever* on the earth's surface soldiers and sailors and airmen have come to clear a jungle, to lay an airstrip, to construct a pipeline, to transport supplies, to hold a base, to take their places alongside hard-pressed allies, "they have found the church there."

Here the selections must be fragmentary, just a few among many similar incidents in each country.

II

FROM *West Africa* a member of the Australian forces writes home:

"When I first came out I was sent right up-country with another two white men. Up there we made friends with the missionary, who was an American. He rather upset my conceptions of what a missionary's job was. It is a real tough one, plenty of kicks and pricks, badly handicapped through lack of money. His place is nearly a hundred miles from the nearest white man, and he treks through the bush to visit his people, sometimes for months on end.

"At the nearest village to us there were two ladies—can't say which Church, but they had their hands full running a mission and doctoring up the natives, as the nearest hospital and doctor were thirty miles away. As an on-looker I should say that lots more help could and should be given to the natives of this colony, and I am sure if only those missionaries would write their experiences no one would grudge the necessary help."

And an American lad sends this inquiry to his minister:

"Sir, I would like to know if there are any more of our missionaries down here in Africa? If there are, I would sure like to meet them."

A Major in the American Army summarizes his appraisal:

"The best cure I can think of for atheism would be a few days spent with the missionaries here—and incidentally the best example of church unity one could ask for is provided by the Protestant Church here. The Protestant denominations in this country simply

call themselves 'The Church of Christ in Africa.' If more of our people at home could see this work at first hand you would never again have difficulty in raising funds for foreign missions."

An Irish soldier speaks of the impression made upon him by African troops:

"At various times we have been in contact with Negro troops, and I have been amazed at their honesty. I'm not suggesting the army is dishonest; when people take things, they call it 'borrowing,' but these black troops don't 'borrow,' and I have never known one to tell a lie. We asked the reason, and were told the missionary had said it was wrong. Their whole mode of life seems to be centered on what they have been taught by people like Mr. G., so you see the missionaries' efforts are worthwhile."

His judgment is supplemented by an American soldier's view of the communities from which the native African corps is drawn:

"Among the African peoples the Christian religion is more advanced than I had imagined. Some black boy will walk up and say he is a Catholic, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, or of some other religion. American and European missionaries have certainly aided in civilizing these countries.

"All denominations have, in addition to churches, free schools, hospitals, and fine mission centers where Africans are taught to be ministers. Donations for the American missionaries certainly have not been made in vain. It's a shame that all Americans cannot see the need for aid to missionaries for the expansion of schools and the purchasing of medical supplies."

III

From the *Belgian Congo*, a Captain in the United States Army Medical Corps writes:

"We are working for a couple of weeks at the American Baptist Mission—busy as beavers. Normally there are two doctors on the post, but one has been moved and now the other doctor is attempting to run the entire hospital, the leper colony a few miles away, dis-

pensaries out in the bush, the teaching program for native nurses and midwives, and the administrative end of things. Thirty-five thousand patients were treated here last year, and so you can imagine just how busy one doctor would be! We are being wonderfully fed and treated by some of the grandest people I have ever met. It is inspiring to see what these missionaries do and how they are beloved and respected by the natives."

A fellow officer stationed in the Congo gives his reaction:

"When at home they used to ask in my church for an offering for missions, I usually searched in my pocket for the smallest coin I could find. But never again will that be the case; I shall tell them what I have seen here."

A woman missionary of the Disciples Church, invalided home because of illness, tells of stopping at Leopoldville, capital of the Belgian Congo, en route from her own post 750 miles in the interior: "At first, the forces were quartered in tents with the twenty-five nurses in a foreign hotel where they were most unhappy since there was nothing to occupy their time. Missionaries placed tennis courts at their disposal. They were entertained with teas, dinners and especially Thanksgiving and Christmas parties. Fifty percent of the doctors and nurses attend Sunday morning church services for English-speaking people at the British Baptist Church. . . . Flowers from the Union Mission House have been planted on the grave of the army nurse who is buried there. . . . Some of these nurses have expressed their desire to return as missionaries when the war is over. One wrote to a girl friend after having visited Sona Bato, 'I used to give little when the call came at church for China or Africa. Now that I know what missions really are, I'll give freely.' . . . Yesterday I received a letter from another nurse now somewhere else in Africa. Among other things, she wrote, 'If it were not for the missionaries, the morale of our soldiers would be at a low ebb. We can never attempt to express in words the kindnesses they have shown us.' . . . An army doctor said to me, 'Don't hesitate, if necessary, to take the place of a soldier on a plane. You must get home and regain your health so as to return to the Congo; your work here is so important.'"

And one of the American army nurses at Leopoldville adds:

"Don't worry about how your missionary money is used. The work done with it is first class."

Perhaps the most unexpected evidence of the impression made by African missions upon servicemen came in this roundabout fashion through a chance meeting on an American Pullman car:

"A mission board secretary recently worked over her mail as her train carried her from New York to another city. Sharing the Pullman section with her was a young woman, who watched her for a while and then said, 'I'm so curious. What do you do—do you travel for a living?' 'My work does call for a good deal of travel,' was the answer. 'I'm a mission board secretary.' The girl's face lighted up. 'Oh, I am so glad I have met some one who knows about missions. You see, I don't and I've got to learn.'"

"She explained that her husband, a dentist in the armed forces, was stationed in Africa. She had had a letter from the husband's chaplain, telling her about him. He had become interested in a mission school, and was giving the children dental attention. And he had caught the contagion of Christianity, as he saw it exemplified out there. 'I have watched your husband's spiritual growth,' wrote the chaplain. 'He is developing visibly. He will be a changed man when he comes back to you. I am writing you so that when he comes back, he may find that you have grown spiritually, too. Do not let him down. Be sure that you are ready to meet the man he is so rapidly becoming.'"

"'I must learn about the Church,' concluded the young woman. 'I must prepare. I want to be ready to meet my husband.'"

IV

TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED miles across the African continent northeastward, troops of the British forces have come upon other Americans in upper *Egypt*. One of them felt impelled to type a lengthy account of his visit to the United Presbyterian Mission at Assiut:

"Having experienced the joy of spending some time at one of your mission stations in Egypt I feel compelled to put into writing

some of the impressions which I received. The memory of my visit will remain ever fragrant through the days or years that may lie ahead for me. In recording these lines it is my prayer that you use them as you think best, to the end that they may awaken in the hearts of your people the flame of love toward those who have answered the Master's call, 'Go Ye.' In this small way I want to record my thankfulness to God and to your devoted missionaries for the season of Christian fellowship spent together. I shall use every opportunity of speaking on behalf of your mission work.

"It would be impossible to record every detail of the events of the separate days of my visit with the American Mission in Assiut. Therefore, I propose to record the main events of my stay and to describe some of the varied departments of the mission work.

"Situated in a beautiful and carefully attended garden, in which flowers of many hues and perfumes blend with a green lawn on which the patients can rest beneath the shade of overhanging trees, sweet scented vines entwining overhead like the aisles of a cathedral, is the white-stone hospital building. Placed on the main street and standing in its own grounds, it is both central and secluded.

"Although unversed in medical science and phraseology, it was quite evident to me and to anyone who at any time visits this branch of missionary enterprise, that the most up-to-date equipment for the relief of pain and the restoration of health and strength is included, ranging from the humble remover of the ever-present Egyptian dust to the latest and most efficient research and X-ray apparatus. And one is impressed by the hospital's up-to-the-minute experimental laboratory, where delicate instruments are ever in the service of mankind.

"The atmosphere within the hospital is cool and clear even on the warmest day, and the gleaming surgical instruments in the operating room tell their own story of the skill and dexterity of the surgeon to whose skillful investigation and professional judgment many owe their very life. All departments are meticulously clean and the wards are carefully planned, with the result that every inch of space is utilized.

"Dealing almost entirely with the Egyptian population, many native customs have to be considered and observed, but throughout

it all, nothing is allowed to stand in the way of the healing of the body and the complete restoration of normal health and strength.

"Many of the beds have been given to the hospital by Egyptian and American friends. In such cases, unless there is objection, the name of the donor is inscribed on a tablet either at the foot of the bed or on the wall at the head. Clean white sheets and sparkling paint contrast sharply with the almost black skin of many of the native patients.

"On tables in the center of the wards are vases of flowers bringing their beauty and sweet fragrance into the lives of the suffering.

"On the walls hang Scripture texts in English and Arabic which carry a silent witness of the gospel message. Private wards are available for those who wish to have them. They are used by those who can afford a little extra comfort, but for all patients the treatment is the same; the one supreme desire in the hearts of all the staff is the complete restoration of the health of those to whom they minister.

"Many of the nurses are local Egyptian girls; others are from different parts of the country, from towns and villages as far as Luxor and Alexandria and some have come even from the Sudan. All are splendid Christians, giving of their best in the service of the 'Great Healer,' bringing love and devoted talent to their noble calling. Clear-eyed and clear-brained, full of vigor yet gentle of touch, their lips full of words of cheer and comfort, they continually radiate the atmosphere of Christian love. Truly they are the hope and glory of Egypt, Christian youth, dedicating their lives to Christ in the service of humanity, fulfilling his command to heal the sick, care for the fatherless and the widow and bind up the broken-hearted. They have their own private living quarters in which the Christian atmosphere of home life is cultivated, where they can relax from the strenuous duties of their calling, study, read or write entirely at will.

"One of the most outstanding events in the life of the hospital is the weekly prayer meeting. It is held in a comfortable homelike room in which the entire staff can gather for fellowship. In this room I had the great joy of being present at this fellowship of prayer with as many of the staff as were free from duty. This weekly meeting revealed to me the secret of the success and well being of this hospital. Here the fountainhead of power is tapped and drunk; here

in this upper room the entire work of the hospital is brought to the Great Physician whose healing hand is stretched forth in these modern days as surely as two thousand years ago. Here in spiritual communion with the Creator and in harmony with one another, the living streams of water flow into their lives, giving strength and courage, love and gentleness and grace, enabling them to fulfill their high calling in Christ Jesus. In this room prayer and life are vitally connected, the living power of God with the common round and daily task. No dictatorial authority can be observed, only at-one-ness and cooperation, and faith in him who said, 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.'"

The superintendent of the Holland Mission in Egypt sends a photograph of an English Sergeant using his off-duty hours to build a sorely needed addition to the beautiful school building at Barrage.

V

BEYOND Egypt lies the vast and mysterious "Moslem World"—Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Iran.

From *Arabia* writes a first lieutenant in the United States Air Corps to tell of his contacts with the Rev. G. E. De Jong of the American Dutch Reformed Church:

"You are quite right when you mention hospitality. Since I have been overseas, I don't remember when I have been received so cordially. It was just like back home once again.

"Since I received your letter I have had the pleasure of once again being able to visit the De Jongs. I managed to get some typhus serum for them and flew it down one day when I was not working. They of course are in need of a lot of little things that have been denied them because of the war and every time I go to visit them I try to think of something I can take them.

"I might say that in my observations of their establishment and work there, they are doing a fine job for mankind and it is a pity that there is so much strife in this world when there is really plenty for everyone. One of the things they needed very urgently was an X-ray bulb for the mission hospital. I tried to get one through the

army but did not have much success. I am going to keep my eyes open and I may be able to find them one yet."

A soldier in the transport service, a truck driver before the war, writes from Arabia:

"Now that I have been here three weeks and seen what all of you people are doing with that missionary money, I sure have different ideas, and I am going to tell them about it if ever I get home. I sure am going to be a different Christian."

VI

LARGE American forces have been stationed in *Iran* (Persia). One soldier writes home from there:

"I visited the American Mission in Teheran a month ago. I and five other GI's were the guests of a Mr. and Mrs. Elder for Sunday dinner. Very nice people. They invite a group of soldiers to their home every week-end, and it really is a treat. We had a native dish for dinner—some sort of curried rice; for dessert, an ice sherbet. On the whole, it was delicious.

"The best part of the visit was seeing their family, two boys and two girls, ranging from seven to about fourteen; real American boys and girls, the nicest, best-behaved children you'd want to see. It was difficult to conceive that there existed anything like this in Persia. It just goes to prove that it isn't the material things that make life; in a country like this you find a happy family because they know the better way of living."

Another American soldier, formerly a schoolteacher in the United States, had this to say of the Presbyterian School in Teheran and its head:

"I am enclosing a letter from our good friend Commodore Bascom Fisher, whom I have visited many times while in Teheran. As a practical schoolteaching missionary he is the most able and energetic man I have ever seen. He is doing a wonderful piece of work which only a man with extraordinary ability and a strong and lovable personality could accomplish. This under difficult conditions. He

has the love and respect of people of all nationalities. In the city every one knows him and speaks well of him. His home has been an oasis for the soldiers who have visited there—a bit of Tennessee transplanted to the heart of Persia. He and his family are the greatest morale builders in this part of the world. He puts Christianity into everyday practice as few men do, and as a former schoolteacher I consider his school a model."

We glimpse the other side of the picture in a series of excerpts from communications of American missionaries in Iran. One to whose hospitality glowing tribute is paid above says:

"The coming of our army has created wonderfully few problems—and brought us many, many beautiful friendships. Our boys are so devoted to their wives, mothers and sweethearts that on the whole they are one *grand* bunch of men. We love having them share our home, so if you know of anyone over here, do send them to us.

"Some men from the south were here on leave over the holidays. They saw our kiddies when they put on a simple nativity play at the Recreation Center Christmas morning. The next evening three of the boys came to the church service and asked if they might play with American kiddies. Monday they came from 10 A.M. and stayed till 10 P.M. They came half days Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and went back south on Friday. Tom and Johnnie seem like part of the family now. The third spent most of his vacation in the hospital.

"Barracks are four miles from us. With special permission I took a former princess, who is a large and elderly church member, to visit camp. We went at 4 P.M. and I couldn't pry her away till 10 P.M.! She loved it. The camp is what used to be her sister-in-law's estate. . . .

"From a mother in Ohio I had a sweet note thanking me for having a birthday party for her son. What I'd like to do is to thank every mother and wife for loaning their sons and husbands."

Another missionary speaks of the extensive educational and cultural program developed for American troops:

"The library, of which I am in charge, has proved very useful. One

of the first things we did was to loan over one hundred books to the camp for use by the men until their own library arrived. There has been a great demand for books on Iran, especially on the part of officers, and constant calls for books along various lines in which the men are interested.

"The increasing number of Americans in the country has brought about the revival of a society in which I was interested years ago. In 1925-26 a group of Persians and Americans created a society to cultivate good relations between Persia and America. During the reign of Pahlevi the society was not in favor and did not flourish. This year need was felt for such a society and the Iran-American Relations Society has been revived. As American secretary I have been glad to give considerable time to meetings of the founding members and of the executive committee. A series of lectures has been given to American soldiers on Persian life, literature, and history, and I gave one on Iran-American relations. Tours to interesting places in the city have been arranged with guides provided by the society. More work of this kind will be done in the coming year. Articles and pamphlets are being planned to give Americans both here and in the United States more information about Iran. Lectures accompanied by moving pictures will bring Iranians in closer touch with America. It is altogether a project in the promotion of international relations, which seems especially worthwhile. The president of the society is the president of parliament. The vice-president was recently minister of education. The treasurer is the head of the National Bank. There are five advisory members of the executive council. These include the minister of the court, the minister of finance, the minister of justice, an ex-minister of finance, and Dr. Millspaugh, the administrator general of finances.

"Another Iranian-American committee on which I have worked this year is the Iran-American Relief Committee. Long before winter came it was evident from rising prices and scarcity of food that the winter would be hard indeed for the poor, and while the government did little to relieve the situation, private groups here and there were forming to give what help they could. The idea of an Iran-American Relief Committee developed in the mind of one of our graduates who helped in the relief work done by Americans after

the last war. He is now an outstanding citizen, having held various cabinet positions. He saw the trouble coming for the poor and wanted something done about it. Our committee has grown until it now is composed of about forty, all but four of whom are Persians. The Persian members are for the most part wealthy and influential men, some of them cabinet ministers. They have been most generous in their gifts of time and effort as well as money. The committee has spent approximately \$65,000 and has on hand about \$40,000 with which to do relief work next winter or establish welfare work of a more permanent character. Our work for this year has been to supply about 4000 cheap meals a day to poor people, in addition to the distribution of charcoal to deserving families.

"Americans in Iran have found our graduates better prepared than others to give them good service both in ability to speak English and in many other ways. The work of the schools is continuing to serve both the boys and the American regime. We have been glad we could maintain this double service."

VII

AMONG the countless personages encountered in his world-girdling flight, four appear to have made the profoundest impression upon Wendell Willkie. Two, as might have been expected, were the Christian Generalissimo of China and his wife. The two others were a Chinese Christian, head of a college in Chungking, and the American head of a great Christian university in Beirut, *Syria*. Mr. Willkie pays this tribute to the reserved, cultured statesman who, through all the changes and uncertainties of the war years, has continued the task of preparing leaders for the Near East lands of tomorrow in the overcrowded classrooms of the American University at Beirut:

"In Beirut, in Teheran, and in Cairo, Americans have begun to help by founding and maintaining schools open to everyone. In Beirut, I drank tea with Bayard Dodge, president of the American University of Beirut, in his garden. That same day, I had met General Charles de Gaulle, leader of the Fighting French; General Georges Catroux, their Delegate General, and Major General Edward Louis Spears, the British Minister, and had talked with each

of them about the future of Syria and the Lebanon. But it is no exaggeration to say that Dr. Dodge gave me more hope and confidence for the future of those regions than all the others combined.”¹

For eighty years, a chain of “Near East Colleges”—in Sophia, Athens, Constantinople, Smyrna, Beirut, Cairo—have offered as fine an education as is obtainable anywhere in the world outside western Europe and America, welcoming the youth of a dozen nationalities and almost as many faiths, and sending them forth into the leadership of lands stretching from the Danube to the Euphrates to the Nile. Of the influence of these institutions, Sumner Welles has recently written:

“The United States has had a greater influence on the rapid modernization of Turkey than is generally realized in this country. For a long time past the activities of American missions have met with singular success, partly because American missionaries were welcomed at a time when Turkish officials were inherently suspicious of the ulterior aims of the nationals of any European power, and partly because the great institutions of learning established in Turkey by American donations have been directed by men of devotion, tact, and high ability. They have been sources of Western liberal culture where many thousands of young Turks now active in public life have found the inspiration they sought.”²

VIII

THE SERVICES of the Christian Movement to *India* may be a familiar story to informed students of the East or to loyal supporters of missions. But not to men in uniform from both Britain and America who have poured into that greatly disturbed land by the tens of thousands.

A British captain writes:

“We may not have wanted to come to India, but it has meant that thousands of men who would have cherished throughout their lives

¹ Wendell Willkie, *One World* (paper edition), p. 11. Simon & Schuster, New York.

² *The Time for Decision*, p. 247. Harper's, New York.

an entirely wrong conception of missionary work have been able to see that work at first hand.

"The forces, new to India, bewildered and sometimes dispirited in a strange land, have received untold help from missionary workers. The men, weary from the unaccustomed climate and harassed by the cares and duties of the week, find on Sunday many a 'little sanctuary'—a little haven of peace and rest where they can find God and, finding Him, can feel again with their loved ones, quiet in mind, strong in spirit.

"In ways great and small they are giving their time and energy day after day. And this is additional work—they still have their full-time missionary work; and it is certainly a full-time job. Nothing seems too much for these indefatigable people.

"If this is missionary work, it's an eye-opener to me,' said one soldier. I agree. I think it would be an eye-opener to many at home who do not always think kindly of missionaries.

"I have written from a khaki-colored viewpoint. To see these things is a great revelation that none of us will ever forget."

An American lad describes Christmas fifteen thousand miles from home:

"It was surely a joy to be with people who know the true meaning of Christmas. The whole set-up was great, including the Indian food which was served at the Christmas Day tea. I would like to have been in the States, but I had one of the best Christmases that I have had for several years.

"When Doctor tells some of the American boys how long he has been over here they just shake their heads and wonder why, but they forget the spiritual aspect. It has surely meant a lot of sacrifice, but God has certainly blessed. It has been worth a lot to hear the boys sing, and to see the contrast in the lives of these fellows."

Another, a young soldier from Milwaukee, reports an adventurous furlough in Assam:

"This is how it came about. I had a seven-day furlough to go big-game hunting in the Garo hills in Assam. I cannot tell you about the whole trip, for it would take up too much space, but I'll try and tell you about the people and about what the missionaries are doing

—what I'd call an outstanding job. To think what they've had to put up with at first! The Garo people, only a *few* years ago, were head-hunters. I've seen some of the knives they used at that time, and today they are mostly all Christians, either Catholic or Protestant. They sure are swell people, about as friendly as you'd find any place. They will help you all they can, even though you are the only white person they've seen, besides the missionaries. They are very primitive, so you have to be careful what you do around them, or they will take it the wrong way and get a bad impression of you.

"One day my friend and I went out hunting without a guide and got lost in the jungles. We came upon one of their villages and they all came out to see us. We tried to explain to them that we were lost and were trying to find our camp. We sure had a job, for the only way we could make them understand was by using sign language.

"It was all very impressive. It's a trip I'll never forget. When I get back, I'd like to go up there and live with them for a month or more and I'd still do it if I had the chance. Everything is so peaceful up there. They are always smiling or singing, just like the birds, and didn't seem to have a care in the world. They sure are a different race of people than they are around here, or most places in India.

"They sure think a lot about their missionaries. In a way, a sort of second God. He's got to be a doctor, an adviser, and what not. When we were coming out of the hills and got back to the missionaries, there was a girl who had just come in from the hills. Only twelve years old, and she had walked sixty miles to come to go to school which was about ready to start up again after a vacation. It had taken her quite a few days, for you cannot travel far in a day in the hills.

"Well, I just can't put it in writing to give you a clear picture. I'd have to tell you and show you pictures to make you get the full of it. . . . It's one thing I have learned. I'll never take things for granted again the next time I hear a missionary speak. If people could only see, they would understand."

And another admonishes his pastor in Milwaukee:

"The next time you have a missionary at the church who has spent time in India, give him a good build-up. The work they are

doing is wonderful. I got into a clan of them at one of my stations and really had my eyes opened, both at the religious work they do and the splendid attention they are giving to medical and educational advancement. Right now much of their time is taken in improving their homes into USO's for American and British soldiers, and the entertainment they provide is only shadowed by their food. It isn't a bad life, that of a missionary. They are forgetting all that petty rivalry which we sometimes find at home!"

An American medical missionary in a remote section of India describes an incident in mutual discovery across national frontiers:

"It so happened that three British anti-aircraft gunners had become buddies, and contacted this committee to see if they could find some place to have ten days of convalescent leave. What luck! A lone man in a big bungalow asking for three men, and three men asking for a place together. So the time was set, and in due season the three anti-aircraft 'busters' took the train for Damoh.

"They were wondering what they would find, and so was I. I must say that I was filled with trepidation, but the die was cast to do or die. Foolish worry! My cook went down to the station to meet the men. He can use some English. 'My master has sent me to bring you,' he said. 'Well,' said the men to each other, 'we have landed. We have found a place!'

"I met them when they arrived, turned over the home to them, and we sat down to tea. From that moment began a most delightful fellowship with Mills, Rothery and Whittaker, or, as they sign their letters, 'Your pals, Bill, Alf, and Jim.' I had drawn three citizen soldiers of a fine type—home men, here to do their duty, but eager for the mess to be over so that they may get back to their homes.

"Mills is a marble worker from Twickenham, Middlesex. Whittaker is an experienced kiln man in a big pottery, his home in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire. And Rothery is a Londoner, an experienced restaurant man of The Criterion, Piccadilly Circus. It was interesting to hear him go into dissertations on foods as each dish came on the table. 'This reminds me of so-and-so. We make it like this.'

"Lalit Lal, the small son of our Head Master, spends much of his

time with me. The men fell for him, and always mention him in their letters. 'How's that grand little chap Lalit?' writes Mills in one letter. 'I hope he is still happy, and does he miss us much, Doctor?' I was indeed amazed at the fondness they developed for my Sedan boys and other Indian children, and for the adults as well. I am sure it was a revelation to our Christian community, and has altogether changed their opinion of the British soldier.

"The ten days sped by all too quickly. Having gained back most of their strength, they roamed the hills and woods, wheeled here and there, and had two or three small hunting expeditions.

"The first evening I pulled out the crokinole board. They never had played the game before, but soon became ardent fans. Night after night we played, and the day we left we played until train time. So, what with hiking, biking, hunting, games and playing with the boys, the days passed pleasantly. The men said I never could realize what it meant to them to have ten days in a home again where they could sit in real chairs and sleep in real beds and have fellowship around the table.

"Another entertainment highlight was our tea in the home of the Lals. All kinds of Indian delicacies were prepared, as Mrs. Lal knows how to do so well. This, too, was pronounced a great success and the men wished the people of Britain might know the Lals!

"These men came, knowing little about mission work. They left, ardent fans. They attended our church services the Sunday they were here. They enjoyed the atmosphere of the church even though they could not understand a word. They are men who do not wear their religion on their sleeves, but they believe in the God of their fathers, and a sincere prayer touches their hearts. They realized what it means to start at the very beginning and build up a Christian community. They said, 'If anyone talks against missions, we have an answer now.'"

IX

To say *Burma* is to have rise to mind two Americans whose war-time exploits on behalf of the peoples of that land have become almost legendary—Stilwell and Seagrave. Dr. Seagrave has given

us his own pungent account of the years of pioneering missionary effort which prepared him for today's fabulous medical services to the armed forces there.¹ A *Time* correspondent, Jack Belden, describes his discovery of Dr. Seagrave operating in a makeshift hospital just behind the flaming front. Aided by his Burmese and Cachin and Chan nurses in an operating theater which was a roofless, cement-floored porch, the doctor was performing two operations simultaneously. Belden turned to a member of the Friends Ambulance Unit:

"'Tell me,' I said with a feeling of awe, 'who is that man on the porch?'"

"'That's Dr. Gordon Seagrave, an American medical missionary,' replied one of the Friends.

"'Just then the British staff captain called over the fence: 'Is there anything I can do for you, Dr. Seagrave?'"

"'The man on the porch glanced up for a moment and said: 'My God, get me some food. Some of these men haven't eaten for three days, and I have not a drop of food left in the house.'

"'Then he went back to his work with the sweat glistening over his bared torso and the flames forming an orange umbrella in the sky over his head."

X

SPACE prohibits even a summary of "the discovery of the Church" in *China* these past seven tragic years.² The overall impression made upon those who have witnessed China's dauntless agony at first hand may perhaps be suggested by two very different types of evidence—the testimony of spontaneous gifts from American military units, and the testimony of dispassionate judgment by two American journalists.

At Hengyang, prior to its capture, American airmen were so

¹ Gordon S. Seagrave, *Burma Surgeon*. As a matter of fact, one gains a very different but in some respects more revealing picture of Dr. Seagrave's medical unit from perhaps the most beautiful and moving little book yet to issue from the war, Paul Geren's *Burma Diary*.

² A small part of the story is outlined in *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 91-102, and *What IS the Church Doing?*, pp. 62-3, 78-82, etc.

impressed by the work at the nearby mission that they proposed to make regular Sunday offerings to various phases of its work. Two free beds were maintained in the mission hospital. An orphan girl was supported in high school. The printing of Moffatt's translation of the New Testament from improvised wooden type was financed. "Just start telling about some patient in the hospital," wrote one of the workers, "and the first thing you know you have a gift on your hands. And generous ones, too. Yesterday came an unsigned note enclosing \$1450 in Chinese currency. At the same time from a couple of other soldiers came a gift of \$1000." The general contributions in a two-month period totalled over \$31,000 Chinese—\$1500 in American currency.

Dr. William Barrows Pugh, touring all the battlefronts in behalf of American Protestantism, describes a stop at a hostel along the Burma Road in extreme southwest China:

"It was a Sunday evening, and I had just finished conducting one of those church services the memory of which will linger through the years. With the pronouncing of the benediction, two soldiers came forward and sat at the desk which had been used during the service as a pulpit. Being curious, I asked what they were expecting to do. 'Oh,' said both in unison, 'we are the President and Secretary of the congregation, and we are here to receive the missionary offerings.' Then I saw soldier after soldier come forward to deposit an offering with these men. Later I saw the carefully prepared account book whose figures revealed that in two months that particular group of soldiers had contributed for the support of war orphans, a blind school, a slave girls' industrial rescue home, and a charity hospital—all missionary projects in that part of China where they were stationed—the sum of \$32,600 in Chinese National currency and \$257 in United States currency. Do you wonder that the parting words of one of those soldiers has had a sacred significance to me ever since? 'Be sure and tell the folks at home to keep "pitching" and we'll carry on.'"

Contributions to missionary projects from American soldiers stationed in Yunnan Province totalled over \$1,500,000, Chinese currency, in six months.

Miss Sonia Tomara reporting to the *New York Herald Tribune* from Honan Province writes:

"One cannot help admiring the spirit of the missionaries who remain at their posts in spite of war. Before the war they lived fairly comfortably, even if far from home.

"Today they are like soldiers, separated from their families and almost deprived of news. The rise of prices has hit them all.

"Yet the missionaries stay because they can be useful."

Ernest O. Hauser sums the story up in *The Saturday Evening Post*:

"Ironically, it was the missionary who saved the day for the white man—the missionary who had never harped on white superiority and the privileges of unequal treaties, who had lived his unpretentious life without indulging in Kiplingesque self-deception. . . . When the great test of the Japanese invasion came along, the missionary did not run away . . . He stayed with his flock, performing acts of quiet heroism that earned him the praise of Christian and heathen Chinese alike.

"‘Those missionaries have plenty of grit,’ a Chinese businessman told me. ‘I am not a Christian myself. But your missionaries have proved that they were more than Bible salesmen.

"‘They haven’t been afraid of getting right into the mess, and didn’t squawk if they got their fingers dirty. What they did during the rape of Nanking will go down in history as one of the great deeds of humanity.’

"I’ve had these views confirmed by hundreds of Chinese, and it seems to me that the foreign missionary is largely responsible for the continued respect the average Chinese has today for the white man."

Meantime this incident from the area of Japanese occupation suggests the spirit of the Chinese Christians who are living through their eighth year of enemy oppression:

"A group of Japanese, headed by the leading medical officer of an army unit, came for one of their frequent inspection tours. The Superintendent, a second-generation Chinese Christian, with twenty

years of service, was given instructions as to certain changes advisable in the hospital. The Chinese doctor replied that these changes could easily be effected, but that there were certain things about the institution which could *not* be altered. 'First and foremost,' said he, 'is the Christian program. Our doctors and nurses and workers do not spend their leisure in attending parties in the city, are not given to dancing and gambling, but find deep enjoyment and rest in our religious services and exercises; we give outlet to our emotions in praise and worship of God. This is something which may *not* be changed.' While the leader of the group seemed unimpressed, a junior officer among the Japanese interjected, 'Yes, I understand. My mother is a Christian.'

Alongside this picture may well be placed the record of one of the most notable American aces who lost his life in combat. All of his earthly possessions, amounting to several thousand dollars, were left by the designation of his will "to build up the people of Japan."

XI

NOT ONLY in areas of active combat but also in widely scattered places in the *Western Hemisphere* where American servicemen have found themselves unexpectedly stationed, similar incidents are being enacted.

From *Alaska* comes this report from a Baptist missionary:

"Our little Spruce Island lies on the route of many a blue and khaki visitor. The other night a young man dressed in brown came seeking a musical instrument. Off on leave the group had come to Ouzinkie to find entertainment in the village dance hall. As we talked about the violin that had never been used in a dance orchestra we got better acquainted. The violin was put back in its place by the organ. The whole group filled our living-room and dining-room. Some went to the basement to help mission boys carry up ice from the lake and make strawberry jam ice-cream; others told good-night stories to the very small tots who were ready for bed. The captain popped corn in the kitchen. One, more brave than the rest, stole quietly to the organ. Others joined and out of the living-room came

music and harmony—not the jazz of the dance hall or even the popular war ditties, but lovely old hymns of the church, old favorites which the men had carried in their hearts from the home-town church just like yours and mine.”

Private First Class Bernard E. Shufelt describes Christmas for American men in *Guatemala*:

“The soldiers who are stationed in Guatemala say that they had about as fine a Christmas this year as a soldier could have. Our friends in the different Protestant Missions invited us out to dinner and tried to make us feel right at home. I don’t believe that anyone could have done any more for us than they did.

“The services held on the Post were made very interesting and enjoyable by the assistance of the missionaries who are working in this area.

“The furnishings were all planned and purchased by the fellows themselves from funds which they raised by personal donations and the sale of Christmas cards. All of the fellows in the Protestant group have a voice in how the money is spent. Having no Protestant Chaplain, the assistant of the Catholic Chaplain has charge of all the routine details, and is assisted in many ways by the missionaries of this field.

“After our Christmas program the ladies of the mission served refreshments and we played games. Many of the fellows felt a little homesick, as all these joys brought memories of past Christmases and hopes for the future when peace will again reign on the birthday of the Prince of Peace.

“On Christmas Eve we went caroling in the good old-fashioned manner and delivered gifts to about a dozen of the missionaries who have been the most active in our behalf. These gifts as well as a gift of fifteen dollars to each of the three missions who have been making us feel welcome in a social as well as a religious way.

“To end a happy holiday season the American ladies served a waffle supper in the Chapel for the fellows who could get off to attend. The party was a very joyous affair and to close the evening a very inspirational midnight service was held in which everyone participated.”

A missionary of the Disciples of Christ reports contacts with American troops newly stationed in *Puerto Rico*:

"Altogether we have entertained, with meals or with meals and lodging, a total of 143 servicemen and women since our return three months ago. Shortly after we got back we ran into a homesick chap from North Carolina. He is older than the average, married, does not like the form of entertainment furnished in San Juan. He was just about as lost a looking fellow as I ever saw. I went over and started talking to him. Mrs. M. came over and invited him out to have dinner with us. He accepted and now comes regularly every time he is off.

"The past two days we have had Chaplain A. N. Jones, one of our ministers from Texas, now stationed in Puerto Rico, and Lt. Evelyn of the High Street Christian Church in Akron, Ohio, with us. They were very anxious to see our work in Puerto Rico so we spent most of the time out on the highways. Burned up my entire weekly allowance (18 gals.) of gasoline, plus 2 gals. emergency, so am having to ride the busses the rest of the week. But it was a most delightful experience. A number of times during the two days Lt. Evelyn remarked to Chaplain Jones, 'I never knew that this is the kind of work our missionaries do.'"

In *Panama* a Chaplain of the forces there writes this impression:

"We are able to observe the excellent work done by missionaries in the past and the fine piece of work they are doing at present. We have talked to men and women who have lived on their faith for a number of years. We have witnessed the thrilling part played by the American Bible Society. We see them as consecrated men and women who find happiness in the service of others.

"One Sunday we were privileged to have a San Blas Indian and his wife speak to our congregation of servicemen and officers, as well as a fine representation from the civilian employees. It is my firm belief that these men will no longer have to be persuaded to support missions, for they have seen the power of Christ on the Indian's life. It is my prayer that men of our great land will come back from all places around the world with a firm conviction that Christ is the hope of the world, and missions the hope of Christ."

A DEBT OF GRATITUDE

Just fifteen years ago, a small group of wealthy American philanthropists, disturbed by what they diagnosed as a waning public confidence in Christian Missions, devised and financed an elaborate "laymen's inquiry" into certain limited areas of missionary work, in India, China and Japan. Their report, published under the title *Re-Thinking Missions*, had a wide reading and immense influence.

Whatever the intention of its authors, the Laymen's Report undoubtedly served further to encourage misgivings, to shake and even shatter the confidence of large numbers of people in the missionary enterprise as a whole.¹ It conveyed the impression that there were a few, probably a very few, individual instances of Christian work abroad which merited continuance; but that Missions by and large were of dubious value and validity, hardly justifying well-considered support.

Today, another "laymen's inquiry" is in process. It embraces the whole world. It is fortuitous, not carefully organized. It is being conducted not by college professors and scholars, but by hard-bitten soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines of the armed forces of the United Nations. So far as can be judged, the verdict they are returning is almost altogether favorable. Instances of complete "about face" from indifference, scepticism or derision to ardent enthusiasm pile up by the hundreds. Just a fraction of them has been recorded in the pages above.

II

FROM these chance "discoveries," clean across the world, certain general impressions emerge:

¹ That was *not* their intention. But a misleading impression was given both by the organized press publicity and by the tone and content of *Re-Thinking Missions* itself.

A first impression is *sameness*, almost monotonous similarity. The locations are as widely scattered as the points of the compass, the scenes as varied as the multifarious amplitude of a prodigal earth, the circumstances as contrasted as the labyrinthian operations of the most titanic military operation in history. A jungle hideout in New Guinea, a remote Solomon reef, a Tarawa cave, a cultured Samoan feast, the silence of the African bush, the teeming bazaars of Teheran, a university campus in Syria, the fevered unrest of India, big-game stalking in Assam, the desperate endurance of China's millions, even the solitudes of Alaska—the background shifts. But the picture, how little! In each instance we see, first of all, *persons* of dark skin and unfamiliar culture but of strangely similar poise and strength and fidelity and grace; then *settlements* equipped with simple yet adequate instruments of health and education and worship, and *communities* marked by a character of life sharply contrasted with their surroundings—settlements and communities also strikingly alike; then *men and women of the West*, unpretentious, often modestly furnished by nature and circumstance, yet markedly similar and irresistibly impressive. With all of its diversity, springing from different origins and adapted to varying situations, the Christian World Mission, wherever one encounters it, is unmistakably one. And not merely in its setting and work, but no less in its inner genius. The explanation lies at a deeper level—the source of the whole in one Faith rooted in one Lord. There is no other movement which thus encircles the earth and which is thus basically the same everywhere.

For those with eyes to discern, there is more significance in this fact than mere external uniformity. An institution which thus girdles the globe with essentially similar centers is sending out into all the world like-minded and like-purposed persons. A faith which can produce the same qualities of life and of devotion in every circumstance and from among every people is a force which might unite the world. Is there any other force which can?

ii

This mark of sameness applies not only to geographical distribution. There is a no less obvious *similarity whatever the denom-*

inational affinity. The incidents we have met reflect the work of almost every branch and every nation of Christendom—Roman Catholic and Protestant; Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational, Reformed, Lutheran, Disciples, Adventist; American, British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Scandinavian, Swiss, yes, and German and Japanese. The divergences among the various Christian communions and between churchmen of different countries are great, are often felt to be vital, and are not to be underestimated. Nevertheless, the fact must be faced that these differences have almost wholly escaped those who have encountered the several groups in far places of the earth, and that admiration for them has had no appreciable relation to their denominational bases or to denominational kinship between them and their discoverers.

The reason is at least twofold. For one thing, under the exigencies of pioneering tasks amid adverse conditions, Christians of all persuasions tend to develop mutual appreciation, to discover their affinities and to submerge their disagreements. We have noted the statesmanlike division of responsibility among Protestants throughout the Pacific. We have heard the report from Africa: "The best example of church unity one could ask for is provided by the Protestant Church here"; and from India: "They are forgetting all that petty rivalry which we sometimes find at home!"

More important, face-to-face with the needs of human beings still living in primitive squalor and superstition, or even where the great non-Christian faiths have failed to bring a ministry of healing, enlightenment of mind, emancipation of womankind, and credible, compelling faith, Christianity of whatever persuasion stands in such striking contrast to all that surrounds it that the differences of theology and ecclesiastical tradition fade into relative insignificance. An Australian in Africa comments, "There were two ladies—can't say which church." An American soldier writes, "Some black boy will walk up and say he is a Catholic, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, or of some other religion." Doubtless, almost every service man would echo the remark of the Marine fighter pilot who crashed in the Solomons, as reported by a friend: "He did say that these natives who took care of him were Adventists. But it makes no difference who they were."

iii

A third impression is the *comprehensiveness of the Christian program*, and the soundness of such a full-orbed ministry to human life. A soldier in Africa notes: "*All denominations have, in addition to churches, free schools, hospitals and fine mission centers where Africans are taught to be ministers.*" If there are those who still cherish the caricature of a Christian mission as a solitary foreign evangelist exhorting naked savages to forsake their heathen faith and accept his beliefs, such an absurd misconception might well be consigned to the dusty repository of infantile toys and childhood legends. "The typical mission is a center of three or four buildings—hospital, school, church—from which a team of co-workers, usually both nationals and foreigners, with varied gifts and equipment—minister, doctor, teacher, nurse, social worker, agriculturalist—go forth into the community and its environs in multiform but unified service to all who will accept their help. . . . The Christian Mission is still teaching men to worship the Lord their God with all their hearts, and souls, and minds, and strength. This *is* the full and authentic Christian Gospel. It is also the only program for individual or community which offers promise of true health of body or mind or spirit." ¹

iv

Still another impression to which we have frequently alluded is the *role of native Christians* in the extension of the Church.

The overarching impression, however, is the *worth of these outposts of World Christianity*. To that we shall return at the close.

III

THE ACCOUNT of the meeting of men of the armed services with unfamiliar peoples in distant lands as it is given above tells the truth, but not the whole truth. It portrays only one side of the picture.

When a few of these incidents were related in an address recently, an American officer who had served through the first two years of

¹ See, further, *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 173-9.

the Pacific campaign and had been invalided home came forward at the close. His face grave and tense, he expostulated: "That's absolutely true, all of it. But there's more than that. There are terrible features of the picture also." Then he referred in clipped sentences to the disruption of native life, to the devastation of homes and communities, and above all to the moral wake of Allied occupation.

Those who entertain any illusions on that score should read and ponder James Norman Hall's beautiful yet poignant idyll, *Lost Island*. It is an imaginative tale, to be sure. But it comes from the pen of one uniquely equipped with knowledge of the South Seas and with understanding of their peoples.

One thinks first of the physical impact of a mammoth war machine upon the existence and culture of simple folk heretofore virtually untouched by Western civilization: jungles levelled, homes destroyed, whole communities uprooted, crops confiscated, natural resources commandeered. There is gratifying evidence that Allied military authorities have had the problem in view, and have taken such measures as they could to disturb and destroy native life as little as possible. But the welfare of inhabitants and owners has been a very minor factor. There has been only one controlling consideration: "military necessity."

To the catastrophic impact of occupation have been added, in many areas, the more sanguine consequences of actual combat. Like the populations of the Low Countries and France and Italy, these peoples have known what it is to have one's homeland become the stage for the duels of titanic armies and navies and air fleets. But there are differences which enormously magnify the tragedy. In Europe, those who suffer were at least members of nations vitally involved in the conflict whose fathers had some responsibility in bringing it to pass. In Oceania and Asia and Africa, the whole weight of death and devastation must be borne by those who, by no stretch of truth, can be held to bear the slightest responsibility for what they are compelled to endure. Again, Europeans are at least accustomed to modern war; to them, it is another chapter in an all too familiar story. But for most of the peoples of the East, the conflict of gigantic armaments comes to them without preparation. Indeed, we may say that Modern Civilization has descended upon them for the first time in the form of Total War.

The most profound and tragic aftermath, however, as always when the West invades the Orient, will not lie in the externals of life, but in the inmost fabric of culture and morality. James Norman Hall pictures the outcome upon an imaginary island which a corps of American engineers had occupied in order to construct an air base. Dodd, the civilian engineer who had supervised the early stages, has returned to the States and recounts his adventures to two friends. One of them asks if he has had any recent word from the island: "What of General Clarke's hopeful plans for keeping his men apart from the island women?"

"They all went astray," Dodd replied slowly. "As I've read Viggo's letters, I've felt that difficult situation becoming more and more acute. He has given me just enough anxious hints so that I was able to draw my own conclusions. But in his latest letter, without anything to prepare me for it, he announced, quite simply, that all three of his daughters are in the family way, by American soldiers." Then Dodd summarizes the situation of his correspondent: "The island he loved so much overrun by strangers and the life of its people completely disorganized; his turtle refuge gone, his birds gone, and now all three of his daughters—far gone in pregnancy. And no one really to blame. . . . There are now three hundred and seventy men on that atoll, all of them young fellows, lonely, homesick, and, most of them, bored almost to death. Is it to be wondered at that they should seek distraction, consolation? . . . It's not only the young women who are involved; the married ones, too. It's a forlorn situation; one of those problems without solution. In the case of one native husband—killed by a soldier, presumably in self-defense—there was stark tragedy."

Dodd adds his own reflection: "I was thinking of the far grimmer problem—of life itself—that the natives of those islands are faced with; of the fate in store for the vast archipelagoes in that part of the Pacific as the war gathers intensity. What will be left of their native inhabitants? What will be left of the islands themselves after hurricanes of shells, bombs, torpedoes, land and sea mines have laid them waste time after time?"¹

When the Allied forces eventually vacate the scenes described in these pages, they will leave behind them many happy recollections

¹ *Lost Island*, pp. 207-8. Little Brown & Co., *Atlantic Monthly* Press.

of the gayety and generosity of wholehearted youth, much gratitude for fortitude and sacrifice which have safeguarded freedom. Here and there, they will leave tangible mementoes of their own appreciation for hospitality and kindness—a little chapel, a school-building, money. But they will leave, too, a trail of disease and demoralization, and not a few mulatto youngsters who must grow into manhood fatherless, in the care of women who have been brought to premature motherhood. The racial purity of Pacific Islanders, Africans and others will bear permanent marks of Allied occupation.

ii

Unhappily, their problems will not end there. The vast military hordes will depart. But not western governmental administration.

It is not our province to enter into the tangled controversy over the proper disposition of territories which had been Japanese possessions or wholly independent and which have now come under Allied control. Suffice it to point out that, here again, decisions will be taken in the last analysis without regard to the wishes or the welfare of the peoples most intimately concerned. To be sure, much will be said of the beneficence of Western rule and the backwardness of native populations, not altogether without truth. Lip service will doubtless be paid to the principle of trusteeship. But let us face the brutal fact. The finally determining consideration will be one and only one: the political and military interests of the dominant nations. This War has not only brought these lands for the first time within the cognizance of most people in the West, and under the impact of their feuds. It has, for better or worse, brought them firmly and permanently into the orbit of Western power. For them, too, this is henceforth "One World."

With Western political supervision or rule will go, as always, the colossus of Western business—that formidable Giant which likewise, with all of its proud pretensions of service and its real, though greatly exaggerated, contributions to comfort and material advance, knows only one controlling principle—subservience of every human interest and consideration to the amassing of profits. In the Fiji Islands, we have noted an illustration of the results for native peoples of the advent of Western economic exploitation.

In appraising the phenomenal transformation of Papua in the past half century, we found a part of the secret in the enlightened administration of two great British Governors. The views of one of them, Sir Hubert Murray, on the contribution of Christian missionaries was cited. The awareness of the British administration to the real problem of the Papuan's future was revealed by a paper read by Sir Hubert to the Colonial Institute in London in 1923:

"There are many dangers in his path, and the greatest danger of all may come from what I may call a benevolent capitalism which will use the native solely as a means towards the development of the country in the interests of non-resident capitalists, to the absolute disregard of the future of the native race as a whole and of its eventual advancement to a higher grade of civilization. Such a capitalism disguises itself by an excessive and scrupulous care for the health of the natives and for their education, especially their technical training, and even occasionally by zeal for the proper feeding and accommodation of the indentured labourer; and it is possible that, in this guise, it may so far impose upon the Australian public and the Commonwealth Government as to persuade them to allow it to control the administration of Papua. If so, the doom of the Papuan is sealed—he will remain a servant till the end of time."

IV

TRULY, we stand under mighty indebtedness to these native peoples. First of all, for heroism and sacrifices which have saved the lives of our men and furthered our nation's cause. Then, for boundless hospitality and generosity. Then, because of the ill-effects of our campaign and our presence upon their livelihood, their communities, their culture, their morality. Finally, because of the surrender of liberty and the subservience of welfare which our interests are yet to impose.

How may that debt be discharged?

Here, men of the services have already given an example of at least a first step toward repayment—through generous donations to meet elemental human need and to further educational and spiritual advance.

Next, through completely adequate restoration of the bitter losses

in property and equipment which our War has brought upon them.

Then, through insistence upon a sound and honorable determination of their future. And rigorous control of the operations of commercial interests which will flood in upon them under protection of our flag.

ii

To American missionary societies will come a very special opportunity, and upon them will rest a very special obligation.

The proven accomplishments of the Missions which have been at work throughout the vast spaces of the Pacific these past hundred years almost pass credence, as they certainly are beyond praise. But the resources in personnel and funds, especially in the latter years, have been pitifully inadequate to the immensities of their task and its possibilities for the future of the native peoples. The major burden is carried by the Churches of Australia and New Zealand. Those Commonwealths have scanty populations. They themselves have been settled barely a century, and have limited resources of wealth as well as man-power. It is not certain that they will ask supplementation from the United States; but, should the request come, what will be the answer of American Churches?

Of New Caledonia and the adjacent islands, it was said even before the War: "French colonies are too extensive for the small French Protestant Church to undertake responsibility for their evangelization. Cooperation of other and stronger societies is greatly needed if any real progress is to be made toward the complete evangelization of these colonies. It is not right for the great Protestant community to leave this small, struggling Society, representing the French Protestants, to bear the whole responsibility of the evangelization of French colonies. Something very definite requires to be organized on behalf of Protestant missions in cooperation with the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society."¹ With the impoverishment of the French Churches because of the War, and the dislocations among their scattered Pacific missions, tenfold greater weight attaches to these forthright statements. Shall American service men

¹ J. W. Burton, *Missionary Survey of the Pacific Islands*, p. 50.

leave a school, a church, a few thousand dollars as appropriate return to Christians in New Caledonia who have given so generously not only of hospitality and help but also of faith? If the call comes, will the American Churches rise with worthy and continuing response?

No Christian work in the whole Pacific has achieved more noteworthy results than that of Dutch Societies in the Netherlands Indies. Yet, as I was concluding a visit to the Indies six years ago, the young Dutch layman whose responsibility it is to give general oversight to the whole of the Protestant enterprise in that area—that is to say, most of the medicine, education, social service and religion for half of a population of 60,000,000 people—and who has remained at his post throughout Japanese occupation, asked me whether one or more of the American missionary societies might not be willing to come over and lend assistance. The Christian resources of the little kingdom of Holland are quite inadequate for so gigantic a task of service to these primitive millions.² Again, one must add, how much more true today!

It is in the Central Pacific, however, that American association with the island peoples promises to be most intimate in coming decades. Whatever the form which the relationship may take, supervision of Micronesia seems almost certain to be entrusted to the United States, if indeed it is not demanded by our Government. But it is precisely in Micronesia that some of the greatest Christian achievements of Americans in all the world are recorded. No other race looks to this country with such wholehearted gratitude and admiration. Yet, the resources of the American Board there have always been shamefully inadequate. Here is a challenge not only to the Congregational Christian Churches but to the whole of American Protestantism which may well lay a first claim upon generosity and devotion in the post-War era.

iii

Lastly, however, the highest return of gratitude which we, like the men of the armed forces, can make to these Christians of so many lands to whom we owe an unrequitable debt is a radical re-

² See *For the Healing of the Nations*, p. 171.

valuation of the Movement to which they owe all that they consider most important and to which they are dedicating their lives.

If these pages fall under the eyes of anyone whose attitude toward Christian Missions has been critical or sceptical or contemptuous or even condescendingly benevolent, I should like to challenge him with all the force which the impersonality of print permits to sit down with himself at this point, and inquire of himself quite honestly and mercilessly whether he has not harbored an opinion based on misinformation, or more probably upon just plain ignorance, whether as one who makes some profession of intelligence and integrity of mind his view may not have been stupid and just a little ridiculous, and whether his appropriate course may not be a frank and humble confession that he was wrong followed by what religion calls repentance and amendment. The issue is not one of opinion or sentiment or partisanship. The issue is one of fact, of *truth*.

What is demanded is not modification or revision of attitudes previously held and voiced. What is demanded is "conversion," a radical about-face. With all his limitations, the man in uniform is likely to be distinguished by at least one great quality—downright honesty. When he has been mistaken, he admits it. When he discovers new truth, he acknowledges it. Precisely such an about-face, "conversion," rings like a refrain through these pages from beginning to end:

"I have had to abolish from my mind the ideas I had picked up about mission work when at home."

"Two years ago I doubt if any type of missionary work would have interested me; but after actually seeing the poverty and tragic sights I'm ashamed of myself."

"I must entirely revise my whole attitude to Christian Missions."

"Back home we had no idea of the good missionaries are doing."

"The missionaries have proven their worth many, many times since we came overseas."

"In all fairness I must say the missionaries have done absolutely marvelous work."

"If people could only see, they would understand."

"I have written from a khaki-colored viewpoint. To see these things is a great revelation that none of us will ever forget."

"Now that I know what missions really are, I'll give freely."

"I wish some of our sceptical people back home could see what their filthy lucre has done for these natives."

"Gee, I've certainly got a new angle on foreign missions. After having seen these people, I believe in missions."

"This Doubting Thomas has had all his doubts and question-marks as to the value and importance of missions erased."

"The best cure I can think of for atheism would be a few days spent with the missionaries here."

"That and our experiences made us Christians."

"Now that I have seen, I sure am going to be a different Christian."

If we are to match the honesty of those who have reported what they have seen, can we say less?

To those whose attitude toward Missions has not been negative, but who have given less of convinced adherence and of generous support than the facts justify, I would raise the query whether there is not demanded of them likewise a change of view and practice so far-reaching as also to merit the word "conversion." The truth is that the missionary endeavors of the Christian Churches have never received a vindication so definitive and so unchallengeable as that which is coming to them today through this new "laymen's inquiry." We may go further. No enterprise in history aimed at the amelioration of humankind and the building of a fairer common life has ever received more decisive approbation.

If such "conversion" take place, and if it yield appropriate results in *action*, then, indeed might we hope that "these dead shall not have died in vain" and that our world "under God, shall have a new birth of freedom."

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The illustration on the front of this jacket is reproduced from an original sketch of the Memorial Chapel at Guadalcanal made for an Order of Service at the dedication of the chapel. It is used by permission of First Lieutenant Charles E. Halm.

It took approximately 4000 natives a little more than two months to construct the chapel. The main body is 90 feet long and 26 feet wide, with a seating capacity of 280. For different parts of the structure native timbers were employed—ambuala for rafters, vatu and norlea for the roof and altar. The walls are carried out in a variegated pattern of cross matting woven in kwasi-kwasi. It is the finest known example of Solomon Island artistry and craftsmanship. Viewed from the air, it resembles a huge heart, with a cross in the center. The bell-tower surmounted by a carved wooden cross rises above the main thatch roof. The inscription reads:

This is the House of God
This is None Other Than the Gate of Heaven

At the dedicatory exercises on September 12, 1943, the presentation was made by Jason, a Christian native, the leader of the Labor Corps.



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